IS
THE WORLD
GROWING BETTER?
By JAMES H. SNOWDEN

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IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER?

BY

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Say not, the struggle naught availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been, they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

— *Arthur Hugh Clough.*

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FOREWORD

Let every weary soul and fainting heart take courage. While there is life there is hope. Present appearances may not be final realities and are often the darkest hour before the dawn, the bitter bud of a sweet flower. However rough the road and heavy the burden and hopeless the outlook, around the next corner there may be a change for the better. Every one largely makes his own world, and a resolute spirit can conquer and transfigure it. At the worst, life holds a secret of good for every trustful and obedient soul. The universe is friendly. Yield not to temptation, but gird up the loins and press on. "In the world's broad field of battle, in the bivouac of life, be a hero." Cowper tried to commit suicide four times and then wrote, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Jesus sang a hymn in the darkest night of his life under the black shadow of the cross. There will be a brighter day for the patient brave heart; a song will yet blossom out in its starless night. "Fear not ye waiting hearts that

weep." The world is growing better, and already the morning light is breaking. We should be glad that we are alive in this great day, "in an age on ages telling," when "to be living is sublime." There are visions of service that should lure us on to victory. The world is plastic in our hands and we should mold it into better form. Work should crowd out worry, and faith and courage should call and inspire us with their bugle blasts to our utmost endeavor. Such faith will give us an optimistic life, and such life will give us an optimistic faith. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart." This is the meaning and the message of this book.

JAMES H. SNOWDEN.

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IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER?

THIS is no useless question of curious lore or futile speculation, but is one of practical importance that grips every heart and helps to form every life. It is one of the great dividing ridges and shaping forces of human thought and experience. It is the watershed between two opposite views of the world, pessimism and optimism: the one holding that the world, though mixed with some good, is yet essentially evil and will grow worse and worse; and the other holding that the world, though infused with some evil, is yet fundamentally good and will grow better and better; the one destroying the value of life and killing interest in it, and the other making life worth while and giving us courage and cheer in living it. It is still more profoundly the line of cleavage between two types of religion: impersonal pantheism and personal theism; between two systems of philosophy: materialistic monism and idealistic personalism; and between two hemispheres of the globe: the pessimistic

Orient and the optimistic Occident. Such a radical distinction must enter deeply and vitally into our daily living and necessarily lowers or lifts our ideals and hopes, weakens or strengthens our wills, and colors with dark or bright hues our whole world and tinges all our temperaments and moods.

This diversity of view is not surprising but is in accordance with the fact that we see things not only as they are but also as we are, viewing them through our own experience and imbuing them with the colors of our own mind. No two persons see the same thing, every eye sees its own sun. The same landscape that to the painter is a picture of beauty suggests to the woodsman only so much lumber worth so much per thousand feet, and to the farmer so many acres of wheat and corn, and still another spectator of the scene sees no splendor in the sky or purple on the hills or wheat in the fields, but only the brier patch and swamp down in the valley. We all live in the same world, but it differs for us according to each one's point of view, and to one person it is hopelessly dark with growing evil and to another it is bright with increasing good.

I

A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION OF PHILOSOPHY

Our question therefore is first and fundamentally one of philosophy, going down to the central deeps and core of the world where all the great things of life have their abiding seat and source. Pessimism and optimism are two types of thought that are as old as human thinking, and any views we may hold at this point will necessarily influence if not determine the answer we give to our inquiry. This is not the place to enter upon a formal discussion of the philosophical roots of our subject, but a brief glance at these will properly precede and introduce the practical treatment of it. What is known as meliorism is progressive optimism and is the doctrine advocated in these pages.

At this point it would be in order to introduce definitions of good and of evil, as it is generally best in beginning a discussion to fix accurately the meaning of its critical terms, and thus avoid illogical arguments and confusion of thought. But some

ideas are too vast or too vague to admit of sharp definition. They are atmospheric and illusive and slip out of the envelop of words in which we seek to catch and cage them. Good and evil are pre-eminently such words. We know or feel that we know what they mean in a large dim way, but it would trouble us to draw around them very definite boundaries. In general, good is whatever is right and promotes life, and evil is whatever is wrong and injures life. They are opposites as are light and darkness. But the value of these general definitions is impaired by the fact that we do not always know and cannot always discover what is right and beneficial to life and what is wrong and hurtful to life, and so the definitions only drive the difficulty one step further back. Good and evil in our experience assume manifold forms, and these serve to confuse us. What explains one branch of good or evil will not explain another branch, and this increases the difficulty of finding the common root. There is thus a large subjective element in our conceptions of good and evil that varies with our fundamental views and with our feelings and even with our physical condition and the weather. To be able to define good and evil accurately and fully would be equivalent to understanding and explaining them

exhaustively, and this problem shoots infinitely beyond our powers. We can therefore only take concrete instances of what we regard as good and evil, and leave their definitions bordered and blurred with the unsolvable mystery in which the whole problem is involved.

Pessimism as a theory of the world is a vast morass or swamp with various inflowing streams and stagnant deeps and it cannot be brought under any one principle or form of experience. In general it finds the world unsatisfactory with more pain than pleasure, more evil than good, constitutionally wrong at the center and growing increasingly worse at the surface, and therefore inherently and necessarily bad.

One of the roots of practical as contrasted with theoretical pessimism is wrong living which reacts upon one's character and pervades his whole nature and vitiates his ultimate views of life. Many a man has burnt all the virtue out of him and then turned upon the world in a soured and revengeful spirit, branding it all as a curse; his pessimism is the bitter taste of the ashes and dregs of his misspent life. All sin intinctures the soul with its poison and perverts its experiences and darkens its moods; and this is one of the most copious fountains

of pessimism in the world. On the other hand, a clean life and pure heart keeps the vision clear and the soul sweet and is an inner spring welling up into optimistic moods and views.

Another source of pessimism is found in the melancholic temperament of some souls. They analyze and reason to excess and indulge in pensive meditation so that, with Hamlet, their views are "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." They are given to gloomy brooding over the world and see all things through a glass darkly. They are streaked with sadness which tinges all their moods and musings. Some of the profoundest minds and finest spirits have been burdened and plagued with this pessimistic temperament. Such men are often gifted with philosophic and poetic genius and give expression to their pessimism in meditations and poetry as darkly beautiful as they are fatalistic and depressing. Omar Kháyyám's Rubáiyát is a classical Persian expression of it. The pensive Preacher in Ecclesiastes gives a Hebrew exposition of it. Carlyle's volcanic emotions are often acrid and bitter with it, and Amiel's beautiful meditations are exquisitely veined and tinted with it like mottled marble. Matthew Arnold heard its ominous voice in the ebbing tide on Dover Beach:

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

But on the other hand optimism lends itself even more readily to philosophic exposition and poetic expression, and the great mass of the literature of the world is interwoven with its bright threads. Ecclesiastes is the only pessimistic book in the Bible, and it at last struggles up into the light of faith, and with few exceptions the philosophers and prophets and poets of the race have seen the world through optimistic eyes. The sanest and healthiest souls who have seen most deeply into the mysteries of existence have bidden us be of good cheer.

Almost every person, even the most optimistic, has times when he experiences depression of spirits and doubts his own optimism. Ill health, bad news, too much work or worry, even a dismal day may cause dejection which may spread its gloom over the whole world, but which may quickly pass away with a change in these conditions. No one should put much faith in his pessimism until he has tried it out in all kinds of physical and mental weather. A turn in the road or a burst of sunshine may cause it to vanish. After all, bad weather does not usually last long, and it is difficult to remain permanently angry with the universe.

The deepest and most powerful source of pessimism is some form of materialistic or pantheistic philosophy that finds at the background and bottom of the universe mechanical matter, which is the abysmal womb out of which are blindly born all the forms and forces and activities of the world, including human life. The result is that consciousness is only a tiny cog in the colossal machine of the universe, a drop of foam that for a moment is tossed up and flashes in the spray of its infinite ocean, a phosphorescent gleam in the light of its constellations. It comes out of darkness and into eternal night it will soon fade away and leave no

trace behind. All appearances of free will and responsibility and abiding worth in the human soul are deceptive and false. Our sense of freedom and accountability is an illusion of consciousness, which is fostered by delusive religion and fallacious philosophy. The biggest lie in the world is that there is a personal and good God. Impersonal, blind, cruel fate is the only father of us all and rules our stars. Human beings are only animals that in nowise differ from beasts and insects except that they are made of a little finer clay and richer blood and may live a little longer, and all are swept together into the same oblivion. The planet itself will presently perish in a cosmic collision or conflagration, and a vast ash-heap will mark the final grave of the universe.

Out of such ideas necessarily springs the conclusion that the world is inherently evil and is ever growing worse and staggering to its doom. Any appearance of progress at points is illusive and is balanced by equal or greater retrogression at other points. The evil not only grows with the good, but outgrows it and piles up into an ever increasing burden of despair. What matters it if the candle blazes brightly for a little while if it is burning down into its socket and presently will splutter into night?

Human life then is interpreted in terms of this pessimistic philosophy. It is declared that the universal experience of the world is that evil is always greater than good, that all satisfactions are mixed with and merge in disappointment and misery, that every pleasure is only a prelude to pain, and that the last state is always worse than the first. Schopenhauer gave many-volumed expression to this view of life in all his brilliant and erratic philosophizings, and others of his school have declared that human consciousness is the supreme curse of the universe and have even gone the length of recommending its extinction in a universal agreement and act of race suicide. Such a theory cuts up by the roots any optimistic view of the world and plants the darkest and most diabolical pessimism at its core.

The philosophy of pessimism as set forth by its representative thinkers is black as Egyptian night from which they themselves often shrink in terror. In his volume on *Mysticism and Logic* in the chapter on "A Free Man's Worship," Bertrand A. Russell writes: "Brief and powerless is Man's life: on him and all his race the slow sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless

way: for Man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day." Such a view of the world leads us to exclaim, with Wordsworth,

> Great God! I'd rather be
> A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn:
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.

The answer to this false philosophy must begin by trusting and emphasizing our intuitional experience of our own selves as conscious, free and responsible souls, moral and spiritual agents with inherent initiative and character and worth. We are more certain of this inner fact than of any other fact whatsoever, for it is not the product of any sense perception and reasoning, but is our immediate intuition and experience. Taking our stand on this inner reality we use it as a center from which we strike our circle of the universe and sweep it all into order and relation to personality. We necessarily interpret all existence in terms of our own existence, and thus reach spirit as the reality of the universe and God as its Cause and Sovereign and Father. This view puts a sun at the center

of the world that binds it into unity and lights it up and makes it rational and right, so that it "means intensely and means good."

Having cleared our eyes of the pessimism of materialism and pantheism and found God immanent in the universe as its personal rational Ground and Ruler, we can see the world in the light of optimism. Pessimistic interpretations of life turn out to be one-sided, exaggerated and largely untrue. Only a few exceptional persons, mostly eccentric morbid philosophers and jaundiced embittered souls, affirm these doleful views, and the great mass of normal people deny them. This is certainly true of Occidental people, who are optimistic by temperament, and even the Oriental pessimism of Buddhism tends to regard Nirvana, or the final destiny of the soul, as a blessed liberation and beatific state. This point will come up later for fuller discussion, but that pessimism is neither the creed nor the experience of any considerable number of people, even of those that suffer great hardships and wrongs, is evident from the fact that all the multitudinous inhabitants of the world, with the exception of the negligibly small number of suicides, do accept life and live it through to its natural end.

We refuse, then, to believe that the world is constitutionally wrong at the core and doomed to increasing burdens of evil and final wreck. On the contrary, we believe all the lines of rationality and goodness in the world lead, as radii run to their center, to a Power that is personal and a God who is good, and He is "the master light of all our seeing, the fountain light of all our day."

Emily Brontë, burdened soul as she was, flung her intuitional defiance at philosophical pessimism and uttered her triumphant note of optimistic faith in her immortal

LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life — that in me has rest,
As I — undying Life — have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love,
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes cease to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou — Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

II

A PRACTICAL QUESTION OF EXPERIENCE

We turn, however, from this philosophical root of our question to its practical aspects, which are our main concern in this study. We wish to look at the world and see what it actually is. And the first sight of it is bad and frightful enough and easily may seem to be hopelessly paralyzing and stupefying. Yet we must not flinch to face the facts, but look at them fully and fairly. Common honesty requires this, and any other course of reasoning no longer commands respect. An easy optimism that dims or perverts its vision and then sees the world all rainbows and roses is as foolish in us as though we were ostriches hiding our silly heads in the sand. Give us the facts though our heavens fall.

The facts are close at hand and press against our very senses. What do we see? Nature itself appears to be a scene of universal strife and suffering. We step into a forest in its high tide of summer life and beauty and it seems a Paradise.

Flowers are blooming, gorgeously-winged insects are flitting about, squirrels are scampering around, and the trees are choir galleries of song. All this we see as these creatures appear to be enjoying a sunny existence, brimming over with happiness. But how much we do not see! All these creatures are impelled by hunger and are seeking their prey and are literally devouring one another. We do not see the little birds that are starving in their nest because the mother bird is dead. Every step we take crushes myriad forms of life, and every falling leaf is a falling world, involving vast populations in disaster and death. Nature is "red in tooth and claw with ravin," and "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain."

If we are frightened at what we see in nature, we shall find no relief but our sense of terror will be intensified as we enter our human world. It also seems to present a universal scene of strife, of frightful inequalities of poverty and wealth, terrible social injustice, universal competition and cunning and deception, business honeycombed with falsehood and fraud, society shot through and saturated with mean and malignant motives and passions, politics partisan and corrupt, the press mercenary and dishonest, and the whole social fabric

soaked with disease and suffering, intemperance and sensuality, incredible cruelty and crime and unspeakable vice. Beneath the superficial splendid robes of our Christian civilization are terrible festering sores and cancers and dens of iniquity that have their bottom in hell.

These are the more conspicuous evils of our human world, but besides these there is a vast amount of private trouble: exacting toil that wears upon nerves and flesh, tasks that chain men and women to treadmills of drudgery, risks and anxieties and losses in business, the pinch of poverty and uncertainty as to to-morrow's rent or meal, unemployment and the vain, heart-sickening search for work, disappointment in love that is the terrible tragedy that many a soul must silently bury in its most secret depths, suffering and sorrow in all their myriad forms, the fear and shadow and black angel of death, these are but a few of the evils that like demons swarm around and plague the human soul.

An ancient Jewish king, when he heard the terrible tale of a woman in the dire distress of his besieged, famine-stricken city, in his agony convulsively rent his clothes, "and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh."

No one dreamed that the king was wearing this coarse cloth that was fretting his flesh as a sign of his sympathy and suffering with the people. They probably thought that he was having a comfortable time in the famine. No child was slain up in the palace to sustain his life. And yet he was suffering more than any one else, and of all the multitudes of people in the city he was the only one that wore sackcloth within upon his flesh. There is an infinite amount of hidden sackcloth, concealed suffering in the world. All people wear this coarse irritating fabric next to the skin. Stop any one of the richly-dressed, apparently happy people that throng the street and rend his garment and you will find sackcloth within. Your nearest neighbor or most intimate friend may be wearing sackcloth of which you have never dreamed. No station in life is exempt. The people looked, and, behold the king himself had sackcloth within upon his flesh.

We are all disposed to think that others are having an easier time than ourselves. The hand-worker, burdened with toil, looks with envy upon the brain-worker, as though his task were only play, and the laborer may think the capitalist has nothing to do but count his gold. The poor often think the

rich lead lives as unvexed with trouble as flitting butterflies, but then butterflies have their troubles and wear sackcloth beneath their gay wings. There are always hidden compensations in life. Where the mountains rise highest, there the sea sinks deepest, and mountain tops are struck with storms that never sweep down upon the plains. Men in high places are burdened with responsibilities and anxieties that never tire the nerves and trouble the sleep of men in low places. However lofty the station and splendid the outer robe of life, there is always coarse and often cruel sackcloth within. Troubles differ, but all human beings have them. And the inner hidden sorrows of the soul are more in number if not greater in poignancy than all the outer hardships of circumstance and station. It is still as true as in the ancient time that "man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward." Multitudes still exclaim, "Vanity of vanity, all is vanity," and some cry out against life as an evil burden and veritable curse, even flinging it back in the face of the God or demon that gave it and daring to say, with poor James Thompson, in his "City of Dreadful Night":

> Who is most wretched in this dolorous place?
> I think myself; yet I would rather be

My miserable self than He, than He
Who formed such creatures to His own disgrace.

These evils fester and eat, cancer-like, into the heart of our civilization in the most peaceful and prosperous days, and at times great disasters sweep over large areas of the world, famine and pestilence, floods and fires, volcanic outburst and earthquake ruin, and finally, as the climax and sum of all human wickedness and woe, comes a great war that convulses civilization in blood and leaves a vast wreck and desolation. "If one meditated," says Victor Hugo, "on the sinister shapes patiently lying in ambush in the abyss, not a bird would dare to brood, not an egg would dare to hatch, not a flower would dare to open, not a breast would dare to give suck, not a heart would dare to love, not a spirit would dare to take its flight." Is not our boasted civilization such an abyss with such sinister shapes of evil lying in ambush?

We have painted the picture in the darkest colors because these colors are true and every feature of the picture can be matched in the world. And yet this picture is only one side and aspect of the world and there are other facts that greatly modify this view; and while the worst truth should be

dragged into the light the full truth should be given a fair presentation.

As for strife and suffering in nature, a fact which scarcely falls within the field of our subject, there probably is vastly less of it than we think, and we greatly intensify it by interpreting it in terms of our own experience and thus importing into it what is not really there. Mr. Alfred Wallace, in discussing this point in his *Darwinism,* maintains " that the supposed ' torments ' and ' miseries ' of animals have little real existence, but are the reflection of the imagined sensations of cultivated men and women in similar circumstances; and that the amount of actual suffering caused by the struggle for existence among animals is altogether insignificant." " On the whole, then, we conclude," he says, " that the popular idea of the struggle for existence entailing misery and pain on the animal world is the very reverse of the truth. What it really brings about is the maximum of life and of the enjoyment of life with the minimum of suffering and pain. Given the necessity of death and reproduction,— and without these there could be no progressive development of the organic world,— and it is difficult even to imagine a system by which a greater balance of

happiness could have been secured." And this was the view of Mr. Darwin himself, who concludes his chapter on the struggle for existence with these words:

"When we reflect on this struggle, we may console ourselves with the full belief that the war of nature is not incessant, that no fear is felt, that death is generally prompt, and that the vigorous, the healthy, and the happy survive and multiply."

While we admit the evil in our human world which the pessimist alleges, yet we affirm there is a vast amount of good which he overlooks and which we have a right to bring to view. After all is there not obviously far more health than disease and more pleasure or at least neutral sensibility than pain in our homes, and even in tenements and slums? Pain in any life usually is exceptional, and comfort the common experience. We may not be able to estimate, much less to tabulate, the relative proportions of the two, but we can hardly escape the conclusion that on the whole good greatly outweighs evil. The world of life, both animal and human, appears to be a scene of satisfying activity and happiness, and suffering and misery are only spots in its brightness or minor chords or occasional discords in its music. There must be more truth

and honesty than falsehood and cheating in business or it could not be carried on. Politicians are as honest and good citizens as any other class of men; newspapers do and must tell the truth as a rule or they would soon be discredited; friendship and not hatred is the cement that binds society together, and temperance and purity are prevailing virtues or society would perish in its own rottenness.

One reason why evil seems to overtop and smother good is that evil is apt to impress us more vividly than good. It advertises itself more loudly and gets more publicity and attention. In its very nature it is sensational and compelling in its appeal to us. Let one man beat his wife and the whole neighborhood will quickly resound with the tale, while no notice will be taken of the hundred husbands who treat their wives with the most exemplary and praiseworthy propriety. A spot on the sun instantly attracts attention, while its unflecked splendor and steady shining excite no remark. Exceptions are usually more conspicuous than the rule for the very reason that they are exceptions and not the rule. Good is the rule in the world, and evil the exception. At any rate any normal sane view will see a vast amount of good in it, and this is so much on the credit side of the account.

III

GOOD OUT OF EVIL

A FURTHER and still larger reduction in the amount of evil in the world is due to the fact that many apparent evils are really conditions and surprising forms of good and that even out of real evil good often grows. The general fact that human life is placed under the necessity of labor and must grapple with difficulties and dangers is not evil, but fundamental good. The age-long battle with nature has been the education of the race. Man has had to wrest his bread from refractory soil, but by the same strenuous process by which he has conquered it has he developed himself in strength and skill. He has had to fight with fire and flood, with the ruthless sea, with the germs of disease, and out of this contest have grown his science and inventions and triumphs. It is against such opposition that life advances and men mount to mastery. If we were making the world we would upholster it with softness and ease, but what kind of men would

grow up in such an environment? A bird might think that it could fly more lightly and swiftly if there were no air to resist its wings, and we may entertain notions as mistaken and foolish. Poverty is often bitter bread, but it is food that has nourished giants. Rarely have the great men of the world been cradled in luxury, but mostly they have been bred in hardship.

> Poor vaunt of life indeed,
> Were men but formed to feed
> On joy, to solely seek and find the feast;
> Such feasting ended, then
> As sure an end to men.

The inequalities of our human world are not evil as a general fact. It is true that they often present painful aspects, and in particular instances are grievous social wrongs, but in general they are the necessary outgrowth of differing human abilities and conduce to human welfare. It would not be best that all brains should have the same capacity and quality, as it would not be best to have all leaves and blossoms of the same form and color and all notes in music monotones, and out of these varying powers and possessions grow the infinite variety and richness of our world.

Looking deeper into our problem, we see that

good often grows out of positive evil. Suffering must be viewed as an evil in itself, and yet in many ways it works good. Pain is a warning to protect life. The body must have food and drink, and hunger and thirst are its cry for them. An ache or a pain anywhere in the body is a symptom of disorder or disease. The throbbing head and rheumatic pang or fever's fire are nature calling upon us to remove the root of the pain from the disordered system. Trembling nerves and sleepless nights are a protest against too much work and worry. Pain is the sentinel that stands at every pore of the body, the track-walker that watches every fiber of muscle and nerve, the red light nature swings across our road to warn us there is danger ahead. Physical pains, then, are not demons sent to torture us, but rather angels to warn and guide us.

Pains are also penalties. Vice sows seeds that spring up in a fiery harvest. Bleared eyes and rotten tissues and delirium tremens are nature's cry and scream under outrageous treatment and the penalty she inflicts for such transgression. Our social wrongs, our selfishness and strife, unfaithfulness to one another in the fine relations of life, our envy and hatred, inflict upon us the penalties of

unrest and unhappiness and often of ruined lives and broken hearts. We cannot complain when such pains are righteous retribution, and we could not annul or escape them without deeper harm. No one has a right to violate the laws of life and then charge the universe with injustice because it vindicates its own integrity. God could not tolerate sin with impunity and be a respectable God. Retribution has its rights and is necessary to our good and must not be counted as evil.

Further, it would seem that some suffering and sorrow must be an incidental if not undesigned result of the life of developing creatures living at different stages of advancement in an evolutionary world of natural law, for in such a world such events as earthquakes and exploding volcanoes and storms must inexorably happen regardless of their consequences to such creatures. Gravitation cannot cease as we pass by. Many pains are entirely unrelated as penalties to human character and conduct, but appear to be unavoidable by-products of a larger system of law and life that yields us vastly greater benefits. They are the price that we must pay for living in such a world of natural law. Such life, however, is worth the price, and if we were thrust into a world unregulated by such law, our life

would be subject to greater sufferings or would be rendered impossible.

Pain has a still profounder use as a means of discipline. It may penetrate the deepest fountains of our affectional nature and unloose the floods of sympathy and love. Never does the tide of affection flow through the home so full and strong and tender as when a loved one lies upon a bed of suffering. Pain softens asperities, smooths away prejudice and ill feeling, and draws dissevered minds and hearts into harmony. Sorrow touches a community into sympathy, and may bind a nation and the whole world into mystic unity. It is a discipline in patience and self-control, calmness and peace, and especially in faith and hope. Rightly received, it deepens and enriches the whole nature. Suffering and sorrow appear to be necessary to the growth of great souls. People nursed in ease and comfort are apt to be soft-fibered and flabby, and they grow into strength and nobility only as they are cradled in hard circumstances and rocked by storms. Great souls nearly always wear crowns that have been fashioned in the fires of great sorrows. Even the highest art springs out of the soil of suffering. "If I could make you suffer for two years," said

an eminent teacher to a noted singer, "you would be the greatest contralto in Europe." "They learn in suffering what they teach in song." Tears may be our greatest teachers; their bitter, briny drops may be transmuted into telescopic lenses that enable us to see things beyond the horizon of earthly vision. As the pearl is the product of the suffering of the shellfish, so many of the rarest gems of human character are the product of pain. The music of the world would be robbed of much of its finest beauty and greatly impoverished if its minor notes were stricken from its chords. The electric current becomes a glow of light, not as it slips in unhindered ease and smoothness along the wire, but only when it encounters the resistance of friction in the filament in the lamp. Paul's spirit blazed up in glory when it struck the thorn in his flesh, and even the Son of God was made perfect through suffering so that his cross became his noblest crown. We cannot reach this high prize through any easier process.

> Only the prism's obstruction shows aright
> The secret of the sunbeam, breaks its light
> Into the jeweled bow from blankest white;
> So may a glory from defect arise.
>
> — *Browning.*

Temptation, too, has its place in the development of the soul in righteousness. There is no wrong in being tempted, but by resisting the wrong the soul chooses and fixes and deepens its decision for the right. The sins of others may thus become the means of our sanctity; their vices may promote our virtues. This does not excuse them, but it helps us. "Ye thought it evil against me, but God meant it unto good." This principle throws a broad light over the moral evil of the world. Guilty as wrong is in itself, yet the possibility of it may be a condition of our growth in holiness; it is by fighting against it that we develop righteous character and win the crown of victory. The world, through battling against and conquering its own evils, is ever rising on its own dead self to higher things.

We must guard this principle, however, against the conclusion that evil is only good in the making, the necessary condition of good, the "silence implying the sound," leading to the pantheistic result that "whatever is, is right," for this obliterates all moral distinction between evil and good, contradicts our intuitive sense of this fundamental difference, and uproots the very foundations of the moral universe.

Religious faith has ever rooted itself deep in the

soil of suffering and sorrow. The pains and penalties, evils and mysteries of the world, so far from destroying or benumbing faith, have aroused it into masterful strength and inspired it with that sublime assurance in which it exclaims, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." It is when weighted most heavily with the burdens and sorrows of life that the soul falls "upon the world's great altar stairs," and is sure they "slope thro' darkness up to God."

We are much disposed to think that the world might have been constructed on some better plan which would have avoided all evils and resulted in a world of pure harmony and joy; and perhaps we may be tempted even to imagine in sad sincerity that we could have outlined such a world ourselves.

> Ah Love! could you and I with him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
> Remold it nearer to the Heart's desire?

Yet this must be a presumptuous thought, and we cannot suppose that our finite faculties have such breadth and depth as would enable them "to grasp this sorry scheme of things entire" so as either to condemn it or to suggest a better plan. A fly on the cab of a rushing locomotive has little apprehen-

sion of the ponderous machine and infinitely less of the revolving earth and flying stars. Even so are we caught in the mighty mechanism and meshes of a vast organism that far outruns our power of comprehension. Nevertheless, we are in the world that we may understand and master it as far as we can; and however terrible the tangle and starless the night, we dare not give the problem up, but are impelled by our deepest instincts to strain our strength and vision to the utmost in the endeavor to find its clew and pluck the heart out of its mystery. And we do reach points of view and moods of mind and heart that help us to see the world in a somewhat more rational and tolerable light. When Alfonso X of Spain was shown the complicated epicycles by which the old astronomers explained the movements of the heavenly bodies, he is said to have remarked that if he had been consulted at the creation he could have suggested a better plan for the world. Yet afterwards those epicycles were smoothed out into beautifully simple curves, and it was shown that there was nothing wrong with the constitution of the heavens but the error was in human misunderstanding of appearances. Even so it may, and our faith is that it will, turn out that wider comprehension and fuller light

will show us that there is nothing wrong with the constitution of our world and that " God hath made everything beautiful in its time."

The process of education throws light upon many of the dark aspects of the world. We are little children and are only a bundle of possibilities which can be unfolded and disciplined into fullgrown maturity and power only through exercise and effort and the hard teachers of trial. Hence the world is not a flowery bed of ease on which we can be carried to the skies, but is a rough and rocky road, thickset with difficulties which we must meet and master. The lessons are often hard, the pages may be stained with tears, the teacher may seem terribly stern and severe, but God is making men, full-statured men who under all the bludgeonings of chance stand with heads bloody but unbowed, men who are the captains of their souls and masters of their fate. Such men come high, but they are worth the price, and the price they must pay and that God must pay for them " is the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world," which is the school house of God and the university of souls.

Our subject is here shading off into the field of theodicy, from which it cannot be kept wholly distinct, but our object at this point is to show that the

evil of the world, deep and dark and dreadful as it is, is yet in some degree lighted up by this principle by which good grows out of evil, so that our human life is "battered by the shocks of doom to shape and use." This is another large item that is to be set down on the credit side of the account and thereby reduces the debit side of evil.

IV

HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

A FURTHER abatement from or modifying fact in the dark picture of the world is the fact of human responsibility for human evil. Evil is not a dark pall that is wrapped around our world by the hand of an external fate, but it grows up out of human free will and wrong doing. No small amount of poverty and wretchedness is the necessary result of inefficiency and laziness and failure in moral character. Disease is often due to disregard and violation of the plainest laws of health. All the tragic consequences and pitiful dregs of vice and crime are the righteous retribution of human wrong. Social injustice in every instance runs down into the roots of individual wrong doing. The oppressive measures of the rich and strong, the frauds in business, the corruption of politics, and all the evils that throw the social order out of joint, spring from the same roots. The great world war itself in its guilty cause was simply a colossal piece of human wickedness. All the myriad forms of human evil

are due to sin, and this is the poisonous root that produces all the scarlet blossoms and bitter fruits of our world; it is the infinite sea of which the world war was only one stormy wave.

The only way we could have a world in which such things could not happen would be to populate it with creatures that have no power of choice and responsibility. They then could not do wrong, but equally they could not do right. They would not be moral beings but only beasts or mechanical agents. The possibility of wrong with all its attendant evils is the price we must pay for a free moral world. But is not such a world with all its glory and also with its tragedy worth the price?

We are to note at this point that this sense of human responsibility, which is the highest crown and glory of our race, is being increasingly developed and strengthened and refined. Humanity, like a century plant or a thirty-century tree, grows slowly upward and blossoms at the top. Consciousness grows into conscience, and conscience grows increasingly sensitive and imperious. The world is ever moving up the ethical scale to higher and finer and more spiritual standards, and many things that were not considered wrong and were even regarded as divine institutions in former times are now con-

demned and outlawed in the civilized world. This point will come up again for further illustration and we are here simply noting that it is an immensely important fact in the dark picture of the world that this evil is due to human responsibility and that this responsibility is ever developing into higher and finer forms.

V

DARK VIEWS DESCRIPTIVE RATHER THAN COMPARATIVE

THERE is another fallacy about the pessimistic view of the world: it is descriptive rather than comparative; it sees the world as it is but not as it was and will be; it forgets history. The world may be just as black as it is painted and evils may be piled up on it until it appears to be staggering to its doom, and yet conclusions based on this view may lead us far astray. Present facts must always be interpreted in the light of past facts and of their future development and goal. Science never confines its view to existing facts but always looks backward and forward and endeavors to grasp and interpret the totality. A tree is not understood until we go down to its root and up to its blossoms and fruit. A river is not explained by describing the little section of it that flows by our feet: we must trace it from its springs far back in the mountains down to the sea.

The true way of judging the world is to compare its present with its past condition and note in which direction it is moving. Is it going backward, or forward, is it getting worse, or better? It may be wrapped in gloomy twilight, but is it the twilight of the evening, or of the morning? are its shadows deepening into starless night, or are they fleeing before the rising sun?

Such a view must take a long look backward over a wide sweep of time. We may not see distinct improvement in the world in a year or a decade. We cannot see the hour hand of a clock move in a single second; but if we watch it long enough we shall see it measure off the hours and sweep a full circle. The years are only seconds on the dial of time, and we must watch the clock of history for many years and centuries to see how the world is moving. At times and points we may note retrograde motions. There are eddies and back currents in the river, though its main stream flows onward. Evolution is attended with devolution. Humanity slips backward at times as well as marches forward. But we judge the course of the river, not by its eddies, but by its main current, and the goal of humanity, not by its slips and falls, but by its forward steps.

This comparative view saves us from pessimism

and gives us an optimistic prospect. One glance at the world as it is to-day compared with what it was ten or twenty centuries ago shows us it has swept through a wide arc and is moving towards the morning. We shall see this as we proceed with our rapid survey. The pessimist fastens his eyes on the world as it is and grows alarmed and depressed; the optimist sees the world as it was and as it will be and gathers hope. "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this" (Eccles. 7: 10).

For I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

VI

MATERIAL PROGRESS

We see at a glance how the minute hand of invention and material progress has shot forward on the clock of time. Go back ten years, and there was no airship; fifteen years, and there was no wireless telegraphy; twenty-five years, and there was no automobile; forty years, and there was no telephone, and no electric light; sixty years, and there was no photograph, and no sewing machine; seventy-five years, no telegraph; one hundred years, no railway and no steamship; one hundred and twenty-five years, no steam engine; two hundred years, no post-office; three hundred years, no newspaper; five hundred years, no printing press; one thousand years, no compass, and ships could not go out of sight of land; two thousand years, no writing paper, but parchments of skin and tablets of wax and clay. Go back far enough and there were no plows, no tools, no iron, no cloth; people ate acorns and roots and lived in caves and went naked or clothed them-

selves in the skins of wild beasts. But several things have happened since then. Those who are so fond of "the good old days" do not go so far back. In those good old times a man hardly knew what was going on in the next county, and a journey of a hundred miles on an ox cart made him a noted traveler. Now we have reduced the size of the world a hundred times in the last hundred years and contracted it to a quite handy and manageable little planet; now we can go around it in fifty days and are citizens of the world. Then news from Europe was several months old, and the battle of New Orleans was fought after peace had been declared because the news of it had not yet arrived. Now we have placed in our hands every morning in the newspaper a photograph of the globe and know everything of importance and countless happenings of no importance that occurred the day before or even an hour before. In the moving picture show we sit in the amphitheater of the world with reserved seats and see its living scenes from the equator to the pole and look in upon the activities and customs of all lands; and in the phonograph we hear voices from all over the world and listen to the greatest orators and the finest music of the greatest artists; we have even looked right down upon the battles that were

being fought in Europe and heard the explosions of the shells and the cheers of the victors on distant battle fields.

We live in the golden age of invention and mastery of nature. Steam and electricity and gasoline have given us feet and hands and wings that enable us to skip over land and sea and take to the air as birds. Electric wires and cables have enmeshed the globe in a quivering network that is the throbbing nervous system of humanity; and now wireless telegraphy and telephony are abolishing the wires and shooting messages everywhere through the impalpable ether. The world may become a vast speaking and whispering gallery in which every human being can communicate with every other in privacy. Every year brings forth some new wonder so that we are losing our sense of wonder and the startling is becoming the commonplace and the unexpected is what we now expect. The heavens are full of shooting stars, and while looking at one new wonder we are distracted by another. Yet we are just entering upon this process and progress of discovery, and the future will produce magic machines of which we have not even dreamed.

This material progress multiplies the necessities and comforts and luxuries of life from the top to the

bottom of human society. Our humblest homes have comforts which Cæsar never even imagined. Our vast manufacturing and commercial system turns out immense quantities of goods and distributes them over the entire globe. All continents and climates now interchange their products and mutually enrich one another. Lines of trade and travel have become a planetary arterial system in which flows the common life-blood of the world. Every human being on the globe has had his life broadened and enriched by the printing press and steam-engine. Man is hitching all his wagons to the great golden driving wheel of the sun. The hours of work are growing fewer and the work itself lighter, and the comforts and refinements of life more abundant and widely distributed. And thus life on its material side is growing increasingly comfortable and enjoyable.

Yet this picture simply excites the scorn of the pessimist; this is what one of them calls "the Christianized Beast." But even so, is not a Christianized beast better than a pagan wild beast? Such a judgment runs counter to the common sense of mankind. Even the pessimist uses and enjoys these material goods and does all he can to get them. Such a view comes from looking at the world through the yellow

glasses of pessimism. These material goods are a part of human welfare and as such they belong to the kingdom of God on earth. "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer" (I Tim. 4:4). It is also said that these material inventions and products are just as fertile in evil as in good: there is some truth in this view, and this point will come up later for discussion.

VII

INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS

NEXT, we look in the direction of intellectual progress and see astonishing results. Since the revival of learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the human intellect has put forth its powers as a plant unfolds its blossoms. A hundred sciences have been born and grown into giant power. The old childish notions of nature as a capricious fantastic chaos have been outgrown and it is now viewed as one grand system of law and order. Not only has physical science leaped forward, but so also have the psychological and ethical and political and social sciences. Every department of knowledge has been reorganized and its frontiers enormously expanded. Wonderfully is the prophecy being fulfilled, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Dan. 12:2).

And knowledge is not now, as it once was, the exclusive privilege of the few, but it is the opportunity of all as it is popularized and diffused through books

and newspapers and common schools until it is almost as universal and free as the air. Wisdom cries in the streets. The people are reading and thinking as they never did before. Once the priest did this for them; and once the human brain was iron-bound by tradition and authority. But now all such fetters are broken and the human mind is free. The sense of truth is growing finer and more exacting. We feel more the obligation to reach reality at any cost and not be governed by tradition or public opinion or partisan or personal interest. The scientific spirit of truth-seeking is more and more pervading the whole intellectual realm and all our life.

All this, also, marks progress in human welfare. For knowledge is power. Mind pours through matter and masters it, subduing it to its purpose, as sunlight streams through glass. Science secretes civilization. Out of the soil of knowledge grows every good and beautiful thing. It is science that tunnels the mountain and swings the bridge across the river, builds cities, erects factories and manufactures goods and distributes them over the world. Some scientific idea lies at the root of every invention. And science is a mother of art and builds the cathedral, paints pictures, inspires poetry, and sends

melodies and symphonies singing through the world.

And knowledge has its place in the kingdom of God. All true knowledge is so much knowledge about God and helps us to know and do his will better. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). The Bible has no affinity or sympathy with obscurantism. It bids us "give heed to reading" (I Tim. 4:13), and urges us to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21). It is not afraid of the most searching investigation and the fullest and most pitiless light, and its whole spirit is a rebuke to the ignorant and cowardly suspicion of and hostility to modern learning that prevail in some quarters. Christianity is a rational religion and grows best in the light of truth. It has always been the friend of education and the mother of schools and colleges, and of science, literature and art. Christ himself was and is "the truth" and "the light of the world." All things belong to the kingdom of God, whether of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world (I Cor. 3:21–23); whether of Plato or Newton or Darwin, Shakespeare or Milton or Tennyson, and the majestic march of modern knowledge is one highway by which it is coming into the world.

All this intellectual progress also excites the scorn and fury of the radical pessimist who refuses to see any good in what all the world rejoices in as light and life. One of these writers declares our modern knowledge to be "the bestiality, proud intellectual culture, science, wealth of Christendom." But again, this is to contradict and offend the common sense of mankind. This logically means that we should tear down every school house and burn every book. Such a judgment is too absurd to receive serious consideration.

But are not all the forms of progress both material and intellectual simply sharp and powerful tools which bad men use as cunningly as good men? Do they not promote evil as well as good? Was it not our boasted modern science that invented all the terrible and diabolical engines of war that ripped up the earth and mined the sea and poisoned the air with new forms of destruction and terror? It is even so. But this is only to admit that every good thing may be abused and perverted. The loftiest and purest things are ever subject to the deepest abasement, and the very light that is in us may become darkness. But this is not the fault of the things themselves. The evil is not in them, but in the evil men that turn them to such uses. Because

men can "wrest the scriptures unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16) is no reason why we should burn the Bible as a bad book. Material and intellectual progress and products are not to be condemned as evil and branded as the very works of the devil because evil men turn them to their own evil purposes. God "hath made everything beautiful in its time" (Eccles. 3:11), and these things belong to the kingdom of God. "God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccles. 7:29).

VIII

ETHICAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

We are now striking deeper into our subject. A railway map of a continent is a grand thing to look at, and the modern march of knowledge is a majestic spectacle. But these are not the most fundamental and vital factors in our civilization. The world might be moving rapidly along these lines and still be growing worse. Rome had material power and Greece had intellectual brilliance, but they both perished in their rottenness and long since "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome" became one with Nineveh and Tyre. The main thing in human life is not outer circumstances but inner spirit; the moral is infinitely more than the material. The true root and measure of progress is character. This is the standard by which all values must be determined, the most precious and beautiful jewel of the soul, the very core and substance of real human worth.

There are certain great moral ideas that are now

wrought into the structure of civilization that were not there twenty or ten centuries ago. One of these is the right of human liberty. Over the whole ancient world lay the deep pall of slavery. Egypt was black with slaves, and those vast pyramids are really built of human bones and cemented with human blood. A Roman private citizen once crucified two thousand slaves, setting their crosses up along a public highway. Ancient civilization was built on the suffering and blood of slaves, and all through its literature we see their terrible hardships and hear their pitiful cries. But how wide the contrast to-day. This barbarism has been almost swept from the globe and no slave now crouches beneath any civilized flag. The world has discovered and at a great price purchased the natural worth of a man; and the right of every man to himself is now woven into the very texture of its civilization.

Still deeper and more powerful is the doctrine of human brotherhood. This idea was as completely unknown to the ancient world as the American continent. Then every race, nation, and almost every tribe fenced itself off from others and thought itself of nobler descent and richer blood than they. Relics of this barbarism still survive; but these are passing. The unity of the human race involving the

universal brotherhood of men is now one of the dominant thoughts and architectonic principles of the world. Science, formerly suspecting several species, now knows only one species of our human kind. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26), was the form in which Paul shouted this truth from Mars' Hill in a city of slaves, and "All men are created equal," was the form in which our Declaration of Independence thundered it through the modern world. This truth now underlies governments, laws, literature, civilization. To deny it is to relapse into barbarism. The old theory of epicycles is as little likely to be revived in our astronomical observatories as the old idea that men are of diverse and antagonistic blood and race is likely to come back into our civilization.

This fundamental idea is now working itself out into its logical applications and fruits in all the fields of our modern world. Not only has it banished slavery, but it has elevated woman into equality with man. Formerly woman was little better than a slave and was literally a piece of property, so that a man could say of his wife, in Shakespeare's words, "She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house, my household stuff, my field, my barn, my horse, my ox, my

anything." It was not until the eighteenth century that in England she had the right to the separate use of her property, and not until the nineteenth that in England and America she was given an equal share in the guardianship of her children. Now in the twentieth century in these countries she stands on a level with man and has the full use of her property, has entrance to colleges and universities and professional schools, is entering many trades and arts and professions and is rapidly gaining full suffrage. The same spirit of human equality has thrown its protection around the child, and it is now "set in the midst" of our civilization and all our social institutions, home and school and church and state, are charged with its care.

Another application of this principle of common humanity and measure of ethical progress is the treatment of the criminal. In few respects was the Christian society of two centuries or even one century ago so cruel and barbarous as at this point. Prisoners and suspects and unwilling witnesses were subjected to the most agonizing tortures by thumbscrew and rack and other devilish devices; and the most inhuman and brutal modes of execution were inflicted, such as crucifixion, breaking on the wheel, disemboweling and burying alive. As late as the

close of the eighteenth century the death sentence was imposed in England for more than a hundred offenses, many of them for misdeeds that would now be considered venial if not trivial. Even in Pennsylvania at the time of the Revolution, twenty crimes were punishable with death, and there were twenty-seven such crimes enumerated in the laws of Virginia and Kentucky. These executions often took place in public before a jeering rabble to whom the cruel spectacle was a Roman holiday. Prisons were then chambers of horror. But under the leadership of John Howard (1726–1790) and Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) and other reformers humane principles and discipline have swept away these barbarities and the criminal is now treated as a human being and even as a brother. Prisons are increasingly becoming means of moral discipline and restoration. Juvenile courts and probation officers and reformatories save youthful offenders from being herded with criminals in the common jail and seek to reclaim them, and special provisions are made for women prisoners. Crime itself is relatively decreasing. It has been estimated by a criminologist that murder was at least sixteen times as frequent in proportion to the population in England in the fourteenth century as it is to-day. It is true that some

forms of crime are increasing because advancing legislation is constantly defining and punishing new social offenses, but such crimes as robbery and assault and murder have been notably abated.

The entire social fabric is being reconstructed under the new ideal of human brotherhood. This principle is at the bottom of our princely public and private foundations for education and philanthropy. Property rights are being subordinated to human rights. Private wealth is becoming a public trust. Society is growing sensitive on many points on which it had no ethical feeling in former times. Slavery, once a divine institution, is now "the sum of all villainies," dueling has been outlawed, and gambling, once a gentleman's game, is now under the social ban. Conscience is coming to its splendid coronation. Politics is being subjected to higher ethical standards than in former days and is growing cleaner and more honorable. Public opinion appears to be growing purer and more powerful. Business and industrial legislation is making constant progress along ethical lines. Railway rebates, once unquestioned, are now a crime. A great body of legislation is growing up regulating railways, monopolies and trusts, child labor, the labor of women, the hours of labor, protec-

tion from dangerous machinery and unsanitary conditions, compensation for injuries, and related matters, all of which mark and measure progress in the social conscience. The liquor traffic is already an outlaw in America, and the whole world is beginning to stir its conscience and to organize its ethical forces against it. The rich are growing richer, but the poor are not growing poorer; rather their economic level is steadily rising. No doubt there is a greater gap between the very rich and the very poor than there was in former times, especially in simpler economic conditions; but it is equally true that the average economic level of the working classes is higher, even greatly higher, than in former times and is on the up-grade. Not only have public and private charities and philanthropies enormously multiplied, but social justice is in the air and more and more will make itself felt in our legislation and life.

Broader and more hopeful still, there is developing a world consciousness and a world conscience. The world, once broken into dissevered and warring fragments, is now growing into unity. Commerce is a powerful world unifier. Railways spin steel threads that bind it together, and all the ships on the seven seas are so many shuttles thrown from shore

to shore to weave it into one web. We can now flash our thought around the world in a few minutes, and will presently be flying around it. All nations now are neighbors. This conduces powerfully to community of thought and life. Great ideas are now rapidly diffused around the globe. The "West" and the "East" are meeting and mixing, in spite of the poet. It is impossible that antagonistic ideas and ideals should permanently dominate and divide the Occident and the Orient.

The world is developing a supreme court of international law in which its ethical sense will find expression and steadily move up the scale of moral right and obligation. "The Hague Tribunal," however feeble and futile it may have proved as a world force, was and is a bud that will yet burst into a glorious flower, like an early spring blossom creeping up through the winter snow. The common sense of the world is bound to end the waste and wickedness of war and to organize the world as a business concern on the basis of mutual justice and profit and prosperity. Humanity is beginning to realize its brotherhood and to speak on international questions with a majestic voice. It is slowly but surely marching towards "the Parliament of man,

the Federation of the world." This point will also receive further consideration in our study.

This process of socializing and moralizing the world is only begun and no one would claim that it is very far advanced. It would be easy to smear dark colors over this picture; but the process is moving in the right direction, which is the main thing, and is a bud that is beginning to open its petals and give us a hint of what will be its flower and fruit. The measure of this ethical progress and the signs of its fuller coming are written out in innumerable volumes which are available for those who wish to know. Dr. James S. Dennis's monumental work on *Christian Missions and Social Progress* and Dr. Richard S. Storr's masterly and eloquent volume on *The Divine Origin of Christianity as Indicated by Its Historical Effects* may be mentioned as instances of this literature. The modern ethical and social world contains many of these signs of progress that pierce the night like stars and herald the morning.

> Out of the shadows of night
> The world rolls into light;
> It is daybreak everywhere.
>
> — *Longfellow.*

IX

THE BIBLE AND PROGRESS

Before advancing to the field of religion, let us consider the attitude of the Bible towards progress. Some pessimistic writers hold that the Bible teaches that the world, already essentially bad, will grow worse and worse until it plunges into destruction at the final advent of Christ. Is this view of the teaching of the Bible true?

Undoubtedly the Bible paints dark pictures of the world. Its first leaf is crimsoned with a murdered brother's blood, and its last pages are lurid with the smoke and blood of burning cities and world battles, and all the way through it is splattered with the stains of crime and vice. It is such a record because it is an honest book, a photograph, impartial and pitiless as the sunlight, of the world, and of the world as it was from two to six thousand years ago when it was far worse than it is now. But though the Bible boldly puts down the blackest blots on its pages, yet it does not teach that the evil will outgrow

the good so that the world will ever grow worse and worse.

One of the favorite passages that are adduced to prove that the Bible teaches that the world will ever wax worse is Paul's description of it in the third chapter of his Second Epistle to Timothy. "But know this," he says, "that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." Having enumerated this catalog of vices, which is black enough to suit the darkest pessimist, he immediately admonished Timothy, "from these turn away" (II Tim. 3:1–5). A little later in the same chapter he declares, "But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." And then again he at once entreats Timothy, "But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of" (II Tim. 3:13–14). The whole passage clearly shows that Paul in speaking of "the last days" was not thinking of future times but of

the days then present. He and Timothy were living in the midst of these evils, and he was warning Timothy against existing dangers and was not saying or implying anything about the future. The same explanation applies to similar passages in I Tim. 4: 1 and in II Pet. 3: 3. John expressly says, "Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye have heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists; whereby ye know that it is the last hour" (I John 3: 18). All these evils were then present and in the degree in which they were described by these apostles, and they were warning against them as present temptations. The Bible teaches in many passages that evil will continue in the world and it declares that there will be a special outbreak of it at the end, but it does not teach that the world will grow worse and worse until its doom comes. The Bible is not a pessimistic book.

On the other hand, the Bible is an optimistic book. In all its fundamental facts and doctrines it is full of faith and hope and cheer. It opens with the sublime declaration, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." No subsequent event ever broke or ever shall break this primary connection between God and this world. His sovereignty is its eternal security. No enemy shall ever pluck

it out of his hand. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and ruleth amongst the children of men. Though sin early darkened the world, yet the light of redemption also as early dawned upon it, and all through its history as sin abounded grace has much more abounded (Rom. 5:20).

The Old Testament is a book of religious progress and hope. The crude ethical and religious ideas of its early ages move up in the days of the prophets into higher standards and purer faith. Through all the vicissitudes and trials and sorrows of the chosen people they kept up their faith and courage and always sang songs in the night. One of the golden texts of the Old Testament, a voice of cheer that rings through it from beginning to end, is, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps. 27:14).

The New Testament is the gospel of the grace of God in Christ and begins with the angels' song of joy at the birth of Jesus. Jesus himself was a jubilant optimist, being "anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows" (Heb. 1:9), the gladdest man in all the world. He walked through the world, then burdened and groaning with evils heavier and sorer than any we ever see, with strange

serenity. The portentous problems and perils that distress us did not seem to trouble him. He saw the world in the light of God's love and he saw it not only as it was in that dark day but as it will be in the brighter to-morrow. He gave his life for it, stepped out of his empty tomb, bade his disciples a hopeful and cheerful farewell, and went back to his Father that he might send his Spirit to carry on his work. Jesus Christ slipped into this world like a sunbeam through a break in the morning clouds; he was the Sunrise and Sunburst of God.

His teachings were optimistic. He illuminated with new meaning and hope sin and salvation, the worth of the human soul, the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, life and death, this world and the next. He left with his disciples his great commission to them, bidding them to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations and pledging his power and presence to them always, even unto the end of the ages, the most splendidly optimistic utterance this world has ever heard. His disciples went forth to turn this sublime faith into fact, assured that it is no visionary delusion, but that all power is given unto him and he will be with them until their work is done.

The Bible is the supreme book of comfort in the

world. It assures us that all things are working together for good to them that love God, and it opens the gates of the celestial city.

They strangely misread this book who find in it any color for a pessimistic view of the world. The Bible is bursting with light. It reveals the Light of the world, and in its light we see light.

X

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS

ALL progress in truth and goodness is religious, and therefore all the lines of advancement we have noted are due to the presence and providence of God and contribute to the development of his kingdom in the world. We must get rid of the narrow notion that God is present and working only in the church and is speaking only when a minister is preaching the gospel or expounding theology in the pulpit. Some people can see religion only when it is in some official place and is officially labeled and can see God only in a church. Christ is in the church in a special sense, but he is also out in the world and is "the true light which lighteth every man, coming into the world" (John 1:9). The Spirit of God and of Christ is immanent in the world and is working through all channels to pour his grace into men's minds and hearts and incorporate it in the social organism. The doctrine of Christ's immanence is immensely more important

and fruitful for us than the doctrine of his imminence. The present Christ is of more worth and power to us than the coming Christ, though these two aspects of his presence and power are not to be separated. Christ is now in the world, and in his Spirit he never left it. He is working in business and politics, in the political party and the labor union, in the press, in newspaper, magazine and book. He sits in the chancellories of empires and republics and his voice is heard at every council table of state and in every peace conference. God's law and love are active in all the operations of nature and are striving to pervade and control, purify and bless and beautify all human relations. The kingdom of God is his rule in human hearts and wills, and it is his will that men should realize their brotherhood and love every man his neighbor as himself.

There are points in progress, however, which we view as distinctively religious. One great step forward in religion is the right and liberty of private judgment. Only a few generations ago our fathers were burning heretics or cutting off their heads. If a man did not agree with the ecclesiastical authorities the short argument with him was, cut off his head, or hurry him to the stake. A man seemed to be so completely answered and silenced when his head was

severed with a sword, or his tongue was shriveled in the fire. But in time ecclesiastics discovered to their dismay that a heretic was not hushed when his head was off, but that he kept on talking, and now we all have liberty that was purchased with a great price. The Reformation won that victory and never shall its fruits be taken from us.

Next, the Bible and the whole subject of religion are being better understood. So large and complex a book as the Bible, consisting of many strata of religious literature laid down through many ages widely separated in religious light and life, is not to be mastered in a generation or century, and modern scholarship has greatly illuminated it and is deducing its true teaching and spirit. Religion is being profoundly studied and enriched from many fields, and it is becoming less ritualistic and mechanical and more spiritual and vital. The central fact of Christianity now is Christ himself. His kingdom, which is infinitely greater than any church and overlaps and includes all churches and then spreads out over the world, is being understood as the rule of his Spirit in the hearts and lives of men, a Christianized brotherhood. Sectarian bigotry and bitterness are largely giving way to common fellowship and service. The day has gone by when Presbyterians think

that God is a Presbyterian or when Episcopalians think that he wears a white gown. Doctrine has not been displaced or depreciated, but it is now translated into duty and service. The emphasis is now put on the social gospel, and the kingdom of God overshadows all divisive creeds and denominational churches as the Alps overshadow the ravines and valleys lying around their feet.

The Christian church itself is not an obsolete or stagnant institution, but is alive and moving with all the currents of progress. Of course it has sins and failures enough to answer for and it is right that judgment should still begin at the house of God. The most searching and scorching critic of the church of his day was Christ himself, and he would not spare it if he were to appear in his personal presence in its pulpits or pews to-day. Nevertheless, it is still his church and is not wholly unfaithful to him. It is necessarily and wisely a conservative institution, but it does move when it is sure of its ground. Its ministry is a body of educated and consecrated men, and, while they have lost, much to their own advantage, their former sacrosanct authority, yet in spiritual leadership they probably stand higher to-day than ever before. In some quarters it is the popular thing to heckle the church

and berate it as a decadent institution, out of touch with the learning and life and social conditions of to-day, but these criticisms, though they contain some truth and sting, do not rightly represent the church as it really is in its active sympathies and service and forward-looking leaders. Not seldom are such criticisms due to surprising lack of information and narrowmindedness. Blindness and bigotry and dogmatism are at least as rife outside as inside the churches.

The Christian church, once charged and not altogether unjustly charged with excessive "other-worldliness," is now getting a vision and laying hold of its proper business in this world. While still "looking for that blessed hope," it is not standing and gazing into the heavenly city, but it is building a copy of that city down on this earth. It is quitting the business of saving itself and is more absorbed in saving the world. The individual church that is a select social club of congenial people and nurses itself in comfort is passing and will soon no longer be respectable. The church is unifying its forces at home that it may set out on its grand world march. Already it has penetrated every continent and planted itself on every island and flung

its outposts around the equator and from pole to pole. In organization and enterprise, men and money, service and sacrifice, courage and martyrdom, and practical results in transformed pagan people, Christian missions have written some of the bravest and brightest pages of human history.

And Christianity has progress to show that is not less promising. In our own country it has grown at least five times faster than the population. One hundred years ago there was one professing Christian in every fifteen of the population, and now there is one in every three, and, excluding children, one in every two. In the world at large the results are not less promising. In 1500 A. D. there were 100,000,000 nominal Christians in the world; in 1800 there were 200,000,000, and the latest statistics show that, out of a total world population of 1,646,491,000, there are now 565,510,000 nominal Christians, or about one-third of the population of the globe. Of other religions Confucianists and Taoists number 300,830,000; Mohammedans, 221,825,000; Hindus, 210,540,000, and Buddhists, 138,031,000. Christianity has grown more in the last hundred years than in the preceding eighteen hundred years. What a striking commentary on the bold prediction of Vol-

taire, uttered in 1760: "Ere the beginning of the nineteenth century Christianity will have disappeared from the earth."

One of the most painful if not shameful things in many pessimistic writers is the way they depreciate if not defile the Christian church. One of these writers declares, "The professing Christian church becomes *Babylon* (*Confusion*), the Harlot being not merely the City of Rome, nor the Roman Church alone, but all Churches of Christendom, without the Spirit and Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, apostate from moral righteousness, corrupt, lifeless, seeking the pleasures of the flesh, open to the influence of all false spirits and false teachers, having a name to live, yet governed by the spirit, maxims, policies, and principles, of nature and the world." These writers seem at times to delight in dragging the skirts of the church in the mire and even give the impression that they would be disappointed if they found any good in it.

Now the Christian church is not yet wholly Christian and has spots and stains enough on its robes to satisfy the most envious or venomous critic. But neither was the church wholly Christian in the beginning when the Spirit was poured out upon it in Pentecostal power, and when Jesus himself had gath-

ered only twelve disciples one of them was a mercenary traitor. Nevertheless, Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, and he loves it still. We should love it too with the most jealous love, and only the most jaundiced eye or prejudiced theory can magnify its faults and minimize its virtues. The church has in it the Spirit of Christ, and to-day it is better, more Christlike in spirit and service and self-sacrifice, than it ever was in the past. It is the human channel to which Christ has committed his gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. And on an ever larger scale and in greater efficiency it is carrying out the great commission of its Lord as it is making disciples of all nations. Its frictional and wasteful divisions are being healed, and it is beginning to march "like a mighty army." Take the church out of the world, and the Light of the world would be lost, and its salt would lose its savor. The church is more Christian to-day than it ever was before, and this better church is making a better world.

XI

THE WORLD WAR AND A BETTER WORLD

DURING the course of this reasoning some of our readers may have been impatiently thinking, Does not the world war contradict and destroy this entire argument that the world is growing better? Has it not well-nigh wrecked the whole framework of our civilization and shown that our boasted Christianity is a rank failure? Some pessimists are saying this very thing and appear to derive satisfaction from the ruin as proving their doctrine.

The war has been unprecedented and appalling in its wickedness and waste of treasure and life. Never before was our globe struck such a terrific and staggering blow. But everything depends on the point of view from which we interpret it.

Destruction is usually in order to construction. The storm sweeps over the earth, leveling forests and lashing seas, but it leaves behind it bluer skies and greener grass and more fruitful fields. The volcano pours forth a fiery flood of molten lava burn-

ing its way out over the plains and leaving a scorched and scarred desolation, but in time the lava cools and crumbles into rich soil, and the fields around the mountain's base and the slopes far up towards its summit are carpeted with vivid verdure and bear the finest fruits. A fire in a city usually burns down old buildings that better modern ones may rise in their places. Many a church or college has seen its building go up in flames to be replaced by a statelier structure. Our Civil War swept over our country in flames of fire, but it cleansed our flag of its foul blot of slavery and welded our riven country into unity without sectional seam.

"When God wipes out, he is getting ready to write." This war has destroyed two hundred billion dollars' worth of the wealth of the world and killed twenty millions of its people. There never was such a slate cleaning on this earth. And now, What is to be written on the new page? It is too soon to say or see, but some things we may dimly discern. However we make bold to say this: This war, on the part of the Allies and apart from the German wickedness that planned and caused and started it and must bear its full guilt and final penalty as "a sin against the Holy Ghost," as the German high official, Lichnowsky, pronounced it,

was the most just and therefore the most Christian thing that has happened on this earth in the last four hundred years. We must go back to the Reformation to find its like in principle and spirit. It had the same root as the Reformation in the natural right of the human soul to its own life and liberty as against arbitrary authority and brute despotism. As the Reformation shattered ecclesiastical autocracy, so has this war destroyed military autocracy. For the last time, we believe, a despotic military empire has lifted its horrid head over the world. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoleon — the Kaiser was the last megalomaniac to attempt this part and was the anticlimax and vanishing point of this line. This war on the part of the Allies was absolutely just and necessary, and on the part of our own country it was the most unselfish and noblest war of history. It was the Declaration of Independence extended to the whole world. It was the Gettysburg Address uttered again in the amphitheater of the world in which we with the Allies "highly resolved" to pay the "last full measure of our devotion" that "government of the people, by the people and for the people" should "not perish from the earth." It was a war of democracy against autocracy. It was therefore the cause of God. Its

"sword" was "bathed in heaven" (Isaiah 34:5). It swept a freer path and cast up a highway for the fuller coming of the kingdom of God into the world.

This war, colossal and terrible as it was beyond anything the world had ever seen before in all the centuries of the past, was a work of general destruction that is preparing the way for a general reconstruction of the world, political, social, industrial, educational and religious. It was a monstrous volcano whose lava of blood will presently crystallize and crumble into rich soil that will spring up in fine flowers and mellow fruit. Already a new spirit is in the air. The world even while it was nailed upon its gigantic cross in mortal agony was yet finding its soul and was peering into the future with the keenest expectation of better things to come. The war has forced us to look at things in their hard and naked reality and to reconstruct our standards and revalue our worths. It has let loose a spirit that will spare nothing, however old and consecrated, but is bound to shape all things new. The eagle, once it gets out, can never be crowded back into its shell. The world will never go back into its old life. It has paid the price of a better world and is determined that this price shall not have been paid in vain. This better world is to be organized on the

basis of world peace and brotherhood, and is to be a long step towards the long dreamed-of parliament of man and federation of the world. The League of Nations, already framed and promulgated, is only the rough foundations of it, and it may take generations to complete the superstructure.

This hope and purpose is now the demand of the peoples of the world and the voice of statesmanship as it never was before. No one has given loftier and more eloquent expression to this purpose than President Wilson in his various messages and addresses. Speaking at the King's banquet at Buckingham Palace on December 27, 1918, he said: "There is a great tide running in the hearts of men; the hearts of men have never beaten so singularly in unison before. Men have never before been so conscious of their brotherhood. Men have never before realized how little difference there was between right and justice in one latitude and in another, under one sovereign and under another." And speaking three days later at Manchester, England, he said: "There is a great voice of humanity abroad in the world just now which he who cannot hear is deaf. There is a great compulsion of the common conscience now in existence which, if any statesman resist, will gain for him the most unenvi-

able eminence in history. We are not obeying the mandate of parties or of politics. We are obeying the mandate of humanity." This world consciousness and world conscience are now working underneath all the thoughts and policies of men and nations and uplifting the ethical and political level of the world as secular forces put their giant shoulders under the skin of the planet and uprear continents and mountains.

Already yesterday seems far away, and we are rapidly moving into the new to-morrow. "Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day." God is ever abroad in his world, saying, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). This view does not in the least excuse the unspeakable wickedness and guilt of the war on the part of those who caused it, but it shows how God brings good out of evil. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (Ps. 76:10).

As for the charge that Christianity has failed, not Christianity but some of its professed adherents have failed and proved the unreality of their Christian faith and the falsity of their professions. Germany's materialistic, militaristic philosophy, taught in its universities and pulpits and in the councils of

its generals and statesmen and shouted from its very housetops, has failed terribly and tragically. Christianity in this war showed that it has a sword of justice in its hand and can righteously fight. Jesus himself, who was no pacifist in the recent sense of the term, said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" (Matt. 22:21), and among the things that are Cæsar's are his soldiers and their swords. Not only so, but Jesus paid taxes to help hire Cæsar's soldiers and to buy their swords. On one occasion Jesus said to his disciples, Sell your coat and get a sword! And again he said, "Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). He himself once made a scourge of small cords and drove thieves and robbers out of the temple — just what we did in Belgium and France — and whatever this "scourge" was it was an instrument of force and represented the policeman's mace and the soldier's sword. Some people seem never to have seen such passages in, or to have expunged them from, their Bibles. But truer prophecies he never uttered, and they have been abundantly fulfilled. For wherever Jesus Christ has gone there has been a fight: a fight against slavery, against the degradation of woman,

against the liquor traffic, against ecclesiastical despotism in the sixteenth century, and the greatest Armageddon of all against military despotism in the twentieth century. Jesus Christ fought our Civil War, as the event proved, and he inspired our hosts in Belgium and France. The true representatives of Christ and his church over there were not the chaplains and Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross only or mainly, but the armies of the Allies. They did just what he commanded when he told them to get a sword and they fulfilled his prophecy that he came to send a sword. The sword is an instrument of the Prince of Peace when it is wielded in defense of justice and liberty. There are times when the sword of the Spirit and the sword of steel, the Bible and the bayonet, go together and do the same work. This war has swept a world menace and obstruction from the path of Christianity and given it a freer field and prepared the way for rebuilding the world along lines of justice and truth, righteousness and peace. The sword in this war, we trust, has gone far towards ending the work of the sword, and then all the visions and dreams of prophets and poets shall be fulfilled when nations shall "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning

hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

There was a right and a wrong side to this war, a chasm that was deeper and more sharply distinct than is usually the case in wars, and God was on the right side. He did not stand apart and aloof from it as a mere spectator, but he was down in the camp and in the trench, on the sea and up in the air, guiding and inspiring the forces of righteousness and liberty. He had his shoulder under this awful burden and was in the conflict with us as a struggling and suffering God. It is true that he gave equal efficiency to German shells, but the war was not won by shells but by souls, not by munitions but by morale. It was a conflict of ideas and ideals, and the God of truth and justice prompted and inspired the triumphant spiritual forces. "God himself," says Senator Elihu Root, "was on our side." Several times the cause of the Allies was in peril and apparently near the edge of a fatal precipice, but as we now look back upon the course of events we see that at each point of peril there was an intervention which is best understood as the Hand of Providence. "Was it possible," asks Victor Hugo in his graphic chapters on Waterloo in *Les Miserables,*

" for Napoleon to win the battle? We answer in the negative. Why? On account of Wellington, on account of Blücher? No; on account of God. Bonaparte, victor at Waterloo, did not harmonize with the law of the 19th century. It was time for this vast man to fall; his excessive weight in human destiny disturbed the balance. Napoleon had been denounced in infinitude, and his fall was decided. Waterloo is not a battle, but a transformation of the universe." So may we say: Was it possible for the Kaiser and his hosts to win this war? We answer in the negative. Why? On account of Haig and Petain and Pershing and Foch? No; on account of God. The Kaiser, victor in this war, did not harmonize with the law of the 20th century. It was time for the vast German menace to fall; its excessive weight disturbed the balance. The Kaiser had been denounced in infinitude, and his fall decided. The constellations were marching against him. The Marne was not a battle, but a transformation of the universe.

The war has had the effect of stirring up and intensifying the fundamental verities that underlie Christianity and all religion. Whatever boils up out of the central deeps of the world is constitutional reality and eternal truth. The universe is an ortho-

dox institution. It is right at the core, and great crises and cosmic convulsions, like submarine upheavals, bring its primal deeps to the surface. In times of peace and prosperity men are apt to grow indifferent if not skeptical towards religious truth, but under the stress and agony of a great disaster they fall back upon fundamental faith and grow orthodox, perhaps without knowing it. This world convulsion has deepened men's sense of utter dependence on a supreme Power and intensified their felt need of a righteous Ruler and Judge and Father. Faith in God in such a time is a practical necessity to give unity and stability and rationality and righteousness to the world and to satisfy fundamental emotional needs. The result has been that during and since the war men generally have had a deepened faith in God and a keener sense of the guilt of sin and a sterner sense that this guilt demands justice and judgment and a surer hope of immortality. Even Mr. H. G. Wells, hitherto an agnostic skeptic, has given us his book on *God the Invisible King,* in which he speaks of a personal God in a fashion that sounds orthodox. The soldiers found God in the trenches, and Mr. Wells says that "our sons have shown us God." No doubt claims in this direction have been made that are unwarranted, but the

fact remains that the world war has not destroyed but rather strengthened fundamental faith. It has driven men to God as a storm drives them to shelter. Its outcome in the utter downfall of Germany and the severe terms of peace satisfies the sense of justice of humanity and upholds the integrity of the universe and strengthens faith in Providence. God has not come wounded and limping out of the war, but he comes marching in the greatness of his strength as the sovereign and righteous Ruler of the world. "The Lord reigneth: let the earth rejoice."

And so from these various points of view our conclusion is that the world war is giving us a better world.

XII

THE EVOLUTION OF THE AGES

THE method of comparison thus dispels pessimism and gives us a better world. We derive the same result from the root principle of the world. The world unwinds and climbs along the spiral of evolution. The planet itself began "without form and void," possibly as a huge ball of gas or globe of molten rock, which through millions of ages slowly cooled into crust and continents. In the fullness of time the breath of life was breathed into the process, and then began the long climb of this mysterious principle which mounted up through higher forms until man stood upon his feet in the image of God. Flesh blazed into spirit, and spirit became divine and immortal. In this long process life conserved all its gains, and every step forward and upward in the lower levels of life mounted and was transmuted into the highest form and crown at the summit. Man is thus the heir of the whole cosmic history of the globe.

Human history itself continues along this spiral and is an evolution. Each generation does not begin the world's work anew, but takes it up at the point where the preceding generation left off. Any improvement, progress, once made, is built into the structure of the world and never after is really lost. The age that invented the alphabet made a powerful and imperishable contribution to our human world. The inventors of the plow and loom enriched it for all time. Egypt and Babylon, Nineveh and Tyre made steps that carried the whole world forward. The Hebrew idea of religion, the Greek idea of beauty, the Roman idea of law, and the Saxon idea of liberty, are wrought into the very texture of our civilization. The Reformation established a principle for all the coming centuries. "The American Democracy," says Motley, "is the result of all that was great in by-gone ages. All led to it. It embodies all. Mt. Sinai is in it; Greece is in it; Egypt is in it; Rome is in it; England is in it. All the arts are in it; and all the Reformations; and all the discoveries." Every battle field, whether of the Marne or Marathon, has yielded us a victory. All the science, literature and art of the past are heaped up for us as our inheritance. We stand on the top of the ages with

all their accumulated wealth under our feet. The world's progress is a river into which every nation and every generation pours a tributary stream. It is a growing tree: every century adds a ring. First comes the root, knotted, hard and bitter, buried deep under the strata of primitive ages; then come the trunk and branches; then leaves and blossoms and the tree blazes with color; finally the ripe luscious fruit. The prehistoric ages were the root out of which human history has grown. Leaves and buds are just beginning to appear. By and by this mighty tree will blossom as the rose and drop its fruitage on every land. And thus under the uplift and guidance of the immanent Spirit of God the world moves forward and grows upward.

This accumulating social inheritance works for human improvement much more rapidly and powerfully than biological heredity, which works very slowly and may not effect any perceptible change in human nature in a thousand years. It is possible that an infant born to-day does not radically differ from one born of primitive cave parents. A Patagonian infant does not greatly differ in capacity from an American infant. Put the Patagonian infant in an American home, and it will grow up to the full stature of American civilization; and put

an American infant in a Patagonian hut, and it will grow up under all the limitations of Patagonian barbarism. The enormous difference in intellectual and social level between the American with 500,000 words in his dictionary and the Patagonian with only 500 words in his total vocabulary is due to the difference in their social inheritance and environment.

The introduction of a higher culture among a people may rapidly lift them to a higher grade of civilization, as is often seen in the work of foreign missionaries among barbarians and savages. When Darwin first visited the Patagonians he thought them the lowest of human beings, but when he visited them later after Christian missions had been introduced among them he was so astonished at their improvement that he contributed twenty-five pounds to the mission and continued to do so annually until his death. Thus barbaric and savage people may be lifted in a single generation to a height of civilization that may have cost civilized people thousands of years to attain. Japan in half a century has leaped into a front rank among nations by means of this rapid absorption and assimilation of foreign culture. "If the incoming generation of men," says Benjamin Kidd

in his *Science and Power,* "were submitted to a new collective inheritance, including in particular its psychic elements, they would take it up as readily as they did the old. We should then have the surprising spectacle of a great change in the world, appearing to the observer as if a fundamental alteration in human nature had suddenly taken place on a universal scale." The introduction of Christianity among low races has worked such sudden wonders, as in the New Hebrides, so that a new race of people is born in a generation. This power of social heredity to accumulate and crystallize the intellectual and moral gains of the past and transmit them to the next generation and spread them over the world is one of the most powerful factors in the progress of the world and is one of the most hopeful facts in the outlook upon the future.

All men have labored and left fruits of toil
As precious seed to fertilize our soil.
We speak their language and their image bear,
Repeat their customs and their habits wear.
Their hopes and fears and every subtle mood
Have slipped into us and soaked in our blood.
Their hands are on us and clutch round our hearts;
Though dead they mold and move us with their arts.

Of course in this general progress there have been

points and periods of retrogression. Evolution sometimes results in degeneration. The battle line of humanity does not march across the field with equal step and unbroken front. Here and there it wavers, halts, breaks. At times the whole line seems driven back in confusion, as in the Dark Ages. But this retreat is only to reform and move on towards victory. We have faith that there is at the heart of the world a mighty onward urge and that nothing can stop this forward sweep of the gulf stream of the ages. The hour hand of history can never be turned back. The oak can never be crushed back into the acorn. Omnipotence is in this movement. The constellations are marching behind it. God is in his heaven, and all will yet be right with his world.

The world is yet young. Professor N. S. Shaler, of Harvard, estimated that the world is a hundred millions of years old and that it will last another hundred million years. The very planet is still in the workshop and will not be finished for countless ages. Humanity is yet in its infancy. The centuries stretch out before it in vast vistas. It has plenty of time in which to outgrow the infirmities of youth and ripen into maturity. There is before it a prospect of hope and splendid optimism. The

future is rosy with morning light. Nothing has been done that shall not be better done. Every human achievement shall be infinitely surpassed. Truth shall be taken from the scaffold and wrong driven from the throne. More and more shall He whose right it is reign and the will of God be done on earth as it is in heaven. The visions of the Hebrew prophets of the Messianic kingdom shall be fulfilled in their true spiritual and glorious meaning. Uninspired prophets have caught the same vision. John Fiske, theistic evolutionist, saw it when he wrote: "The future is lighted for us with the radiant colors of hope. Strife and sorrow shall disappear. Peace and love shall reign supreme. The dream of poets, the lesson of priest and prophet, the inspiration of the great musician, is confirmed in the light of modern knowledge; and as we gird ourselves for the work of life we may look forward to the time when in the truest sense the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords." And Browning, the profoundly Christian and optimistic poet of our age, struck the same triumphant note and grand chord:

For these things tend still upward, progress is
The law of life, man is not man as yet,
Nor shall I deem his object served, his end
Attained, his genuine strength put fairly forth,
While only here and there a star dispels
The darkness, here and there a towering mind
O'erlooks its prostrate fellows; when the host
Is out at once to the despair of night,
When all mankind alike is perfected,
Equal in full-blown powers — then, not till then,
I say, begins man's general infancy.

XIII

SOME GENERAL OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

SOME general objections to the course of our argument may now be considered. It is not surprising that there is opposition to the optimistic view of the world, for every subject encounters difficulties, and anything so complex and profound as a theory of the world is specially open to criticism and attack. Pessimists can give reasons for their view that are plausible and powerful. They are often men of learning and logic, even of genius such as Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, who can raise objections to optimism that seem convincing and unanswerable. Many of these arguments have already been considered and their fallacy exposed in the course of these pages, but there are several general criticisms which will now be examined.

The first of these objections affirms that while the world is advancing at points yet it is receding at other points, and thus there is no general and real progress. Waves move over the ocean, but the

ocean itself does not move. So is it with human progress: it rolls over the world in waves, but the world as a whole makes no progress. The lines of advance that have been considered and exploited, such as progress in invention, knowledge and ethics, have affected only portions and relatively small portions of the world, and vast continents and peoples, such as Africa and India and China, have been scarcely or only superficially touched by them. Not only so, but regions that once were seats of great civilizations, empires and cities, such as Egypt and Syria and Mesopotamia, have relapsed into a condition little better than barbarism. Thus progress comes and goes, like waves and tides, but the great sea of the world remains stationary and stagnant and perhaps only grows more foul and bitter.

This objection, however, gives way under closer examination. It is of course true that the world advances more rapidly at some points than at others, and some considerable portions of the earth, such as regions up in the arctics and down in the tropics, have as yet responded but little to progress in civilization. But this only means that the world does not march abreast but in a long procession, and the head of the column moves more rapidly than the rear. Nevertheless the hindmost peoples will in

time be touched by the spirit of progress as they are reached by the great common life that more and more will flow around the world and infiltrate into all regions and invigorate and uplift all backward peoples. Already hopeful results have been obtained among the lowest savages, and we have good ground for believing that in time humanity as a whole will rise to a higher level.

It is also true that regions once the seat of a splendid civilization are now largely barren and have relapsed into a low and stagnant state, but this is an exceptional fact. Civilization is constantly getting a more secure footing and attaining a greater degree of stability. As world unity increases it will have common foundations and safeguards on all continents and islands, and then progress once made at any point will be more secure and less subject to fluctuation and decline.

A general answer to this objection is that progress must work at centers and thence spread, and in the nature of things we are to expect to find the world more advanced at some points than at others. Civilization is not a fixed sea, swept by waves of motion in which the body of water does not move, but it is rather a rising sea that is overflowing its shores and spreading over the land.

Another general objection to optimism is that while good grows yet evil also grows and keeps pace with it, if it does not actually outgrow it. The relative proportions of the two are thus fixed, or if there is any change in the ratio it is in favor of evil and against good. Who can say that the world in its average and balance of good and evil is any better to-day than it was a thousand or five thousand years ago? Sometimes evil does seem enormously to increase and overtop good, as when a simple rural community rapidly grows into a crowded industrial population and into the splendors and slums and vices of a great city.

It is again true, as a matter of course, that evil does grow along with good, as weeds grow along with wheat, and at points evil may grow faster than good, as when a region in which gold or oil is discovered is overrun with an inrush of population in eager pursuit of wealth.

But two facts abate this view. For one thing, progress in knowledge and ethics increases men's sense of evil, develops a finer and sterner conscience, and this makes them aware of evils that were not noticed before, because they were insensitive to them. We have already seen that many things our fathers approved are now under our condemna-

tion. Acts that formerly were sanctioned as virtues by the church are now branded as crimes by the state. Thus social progress creates new evils by judging human conduct by progressively higher standards and keener conscience. "There is no social question," says Dr. F. G. Peabody, "in Turkey or Egypt," and "The more things improve," says Herbert Spencer, "the louder become the exclamations about their badness." Some evils are thus the sign and proof of progress in good.

This principle throws light on the progressing social order. At no point in our modern world does the problem of human welfare pinch so tight and sore as in this order. There can be no question that the social order has greatly improved since the days of ancient slavery and mediæval serfdom; and even in our present industrial and capitalistic system there has been and is still steadily going on marked amelioration and betterment. Capital and labor are getting to understand each other and to work together more and more justly. And yet probably at no other time have there been greater social unrest and deeper complaints and mutterings, at times breaking out in strikes and riots and private wars. What is the explanation? We quote from Dr. F. G. Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Social*

Question, a book that treats this whole subject in a remarkably sane and satisfying way, some sentences which we believe throw general light upon this question: "Fifty years ago the great body of hand-workers were ignorant and unobservant; now they have eaten of the tree of knowledge and their eyes are opened. They look about them at the prodigious productiveness of modern industry, and it seems plain to them that the division of profits is unjust. That which incites them to revolt is not that they earn less than before, but that they know more than before, and feel and desire infinitely more. That which makes them dissatisfied is not that their economic condition grows worse, but that their emotional and intellectual life is wakened and demands new satisfactions." Thus desires increase faster than satisfactions, and progress carries in its own bosom the seeds of discontent. But such discontent is itself a proof of progress and is a spring of energy that drives it on.

Another modifying fact bearing on this objection is that evil carries in its own bosom the seeds of its self-destruction, and good by its nature is self-perpetuating. It is obvious that good by its nature is longer-lived than evil, because it is obedience to the laws of life and evil is disobedience; good is

health, and evil is disease; good is life, and evil is death. Violent evils, such as vices and crimes, run their swift career and cut themselves short. Good has a longer heredity in the divine economy than evil, " for I Jehovah am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." Hereditary iniquity runs out in several generations, but hereditary good runs down into thousands of descendants.

When evil in a community or country grows big and virulent, like a fierce boil on the social body, it bursts or is lanced and is thus emptied of its poisonous contents and the social body is relieved. Thus reform rises and puts aggressive evils down. When ecclesiastical autocracy grew into an intolerable despotism the Reformation arose and shattered its power. And when military despotism grew into a monstrous menace to civilization, the free peoples of the world sprang to their feet and thrust their sword into it so that it collapsed, and now the world breathes with a sense of relief and security. On the other hand, as good grows and accumulates in the community and country and world it conserves

its gains through the generations and the centuries.

It is true that evil often has great powers of reproduction, like the malignant microbes of disease that multiply in countless millions, and it often springs up unexpectedly, and good at times seems to become a spent force and to lose its vigor and wither away. Nevertheless on the whole good is more self-conservative and self-perpetuating than evil, and in the long run good gains on evil and overcomes it. Good therefore outgrows evil and the world is better to-day than it was yesterday and will be better still to-morrow.

A third general objection to optimism is that all our boasted progress has not increased the sum total of human happiness but has rather intensified unhappiness. Such a contention is largely subjective and must be decided by each one for himself. No statistics could throw much light on such a purely personal experience. However, when we view the world, or our own country or community, broadly and compare its condition to-day with what it was in former times we can hardly escape the conclusion that happiness has risen to a higher level and fuller volume. The marked rise in the economic, sanitary, social, educational, political and religious condition of people has surely given them a

larger sum of satisfactions than their ancestors enjoyed. Human beings on the whole are better fed and housed and clothed and life is more decent, comfortable and beautiful than formerly, and these conditions enter vitally into social and individual experience and increase the general happiness, while at the same time, as we have seen, they at some points intensify discontent.

But the true way to answer this objection is to strike at its false philosophical and ethical root. Its root is hedonism, or the philosophy that pleasure or happiness is the chief end of human life and is the standard by which all things are to be measured. This shallow philosophy will not stand the test of reflective thought or of our experience. While pleasure is a motive that enters widely into our aims and activities, yet it is not the supreme ideal and pursuit that fundamentally governs our lives. We ordinarily go about our daily duties with little thought of pleasure, and when life rises to its highest and noblest moments and actions all thoughts of pleasure vanish. Our soldiers did not enlist and leave all behind and lay their very lives down for pleasure, and to suggest such a motive would be an insult to them. Duty is a star that holds the human soul to its course when pleasure falls as a meteor

out of the sky. In fact, when we do seek pleasure as an immediate aim we are likely to miss it and meet with disappointment. The way to get pleasure is to forget it and let it come as an incidental result of our chief aim. No people are so likely to be disappointed and discontented and miserable as those who make the pursuit of pleasure the chief business of life. Pleasure is the music that floats off the harp of life when it is kept in tune and properly played, and it is our business to attend to the harp and let the music come of itself; and its music will not all be pure harmony and sweet melody, for the harp of the human soul at times yields minor chords and is swept by storms of discord.

We are not in this world simply to have a good time. The world is not a playground and life is not a picnic. We are here to discharge our duty and do our work and thereby attain unto a full-grown personality and develop the crown of character. Pure and fine and rich character is the diamond that scratches every other stone, and this should be the crystallized outcome of all the duties and deeds, trials and tears of this human life. This is the ideal and standard by which we are to evaluate our world, and by this test we believe that the ages show progress. True happiness has little relation

to external material conditions, but is a state of mind and heart, an inner fountain of satisfaction and peace that has its spring below all outer vicissitudes and is careless of the changing weather of the world. This world is fitted up, not as a flower garden for gay pleasure seekers, but as a field for workers and warriors who are to master difficulties and win victories and grow big souls. It is thus that God makes men.

A deeper form of this objection is that amidst all this external progress human nature has not changed and is essentially no better or different to-day as compared with what it was thousands of years ago. Some would even say that the highest civilized man is at bottom no better than the cave man, and that under sufficient temptation and stress the one would relapse into the other. Our improvements are only showy paint and polish on the surface of human nature, and its core remains unchanged. Our whole civilization and our very Christianity are only a thin veneer. "Scratch a Christian and you find a pagan," is often literally true. Have we not seen the most pretentious "kultur" of our day relapse into the most furious *schrecklichkeit* of savagery?

It must be admitted that there is a degree of

truth in this contention and that this is probably the most powerful objection to an optimistic view of the world. It certainly is discouraging to see civilization that has been slowly built up through ages suddenly topple down into barbarism, as though it were a pyramid poised on its apex and liable at any time to fall prone. However the case is not as discouraging as it may be made to appear. Human nature is the basic element of society and changes more slowly than the higher manifestations of progress. The outer in human life is always more mobile than the inner. The clothes are more subject to changes of fashion than the body. Mental opinions are more fluctuating than emotional dispositions. The subconscious depths of the soul are least subject to change, as the deeps of the sea are scarcely stirred by the most violent storms on the surface. Yet changes do in time reach the profoundest depths of the ocean where are constantly raining down fine particles that accumulate in a deposit which in time may become even miles thick. So are there thoughts, feelings, influences, dispositions constantly sinking into the depths of the soul and accumulating in permanent states which modify human nature and may even radically change it. In many souls the ape and

tiger do die, and even the pagan perishes and passes into the Christian. There are men and women who are Christian down to the last fiber of tissue and drop of blood and whom no trial and strain would cause to relapse into savagery. Who can doubt that the human nature of Abraham Lincoln was fundamentally and immeasurably better than that of Nero? And was not he typical of many such souls? It is true that there were such souls even in pagan antiquity, but is not their number relatively increasing so as to indicate a general improvement in our human kind? Here again we must measure human progress by the head and not by the lagging rear of the procession, and by this test we are warranted in a hopeful view of the future as compared with the past of human nature. Such improvement, also, while the slowest yet once gained is the surest, and is the most permanent and most fruitful in future progress.

Finally, a formidable objection confronts us from the field of biology as expressed in the ominous phrase "struggle for existence." Malthus, the economist, first caught a vision of this struggle in his theory that population tends to outgrow food production, the one increasing in a geometrical and the other only in an arithmetical ratio, so that

however food and comforts may be multiplied population will tend to multiply faster and press upon them, resulting in an enforced sinking margin or "submerged tenth" under the waves of poverty. This specter haunted John Stuart Mill, for any social amelioration that he saw was attended with this increased population that brought back the old pressure and evils of poverty.

This fear, however, has largely passed away as it is now seen that population on a rising scale of civilization and comforts tends to develop physiological checks and moral restraints so that the two opposing forces tend to reach a point of balance, and a submerged tenth is not a necessary product of growing population.

A deeper form of the objection rises out of the struggle for existence viewed as competition for the means of subsistence throughout the whole world of life. A single cell must contend with its environment for the means of its existence, and when there are two cells they must compete with each other for the same means. Multiply these cells into millions and the competition becomes universal and fierce. Every living thing is in the iron grip of this necessity and is at war with other living things for the very means of life. It is this that

turns nature into a battlefield, dripping with blood, and that equally turns our human world into a struggle for existence. This view seems to plant the seeds of selfishness and strife in the very constitution of the world and to make an optimistic view of it impossible and a mockery.

The difficulty, however, looks darkest at first and under examination loses its pessimistic coloring and takes on optimistic hues. The struggle for existence is not "the competitive devil" it has been represented to be, but is rather an angel sent to guide and spur and inspire us, one of the great masters of discipline and creative processes in the production of life. Down in the vegetable and animal world it saves life from parasitism and pushes and whips it up into higher forms. "Let the parasitic life once be secured," says Professor Ray Lankester in his work on *Degeneration,* "and away go jaws, eyes, and ears; the active, highly-gifted crab, insect or annelid may become a mere absorbing sac, absorbing nourishment and laying eggs." There could be no more impressive illustration and proof of the beneficial effect of competition in the world of life. Were the pressure of this struggle taken away, it would seem that all the variety and vigor, beauty and joy of life would go with it. There

are risks and dangers, sufferings and sacrifices connected with competition in the living world, but these are the price that must be paid for its high and fine products.

Equally necessary and beneficient is competition in our human world. It is a constant unconscious school in which men grow: it is the whip that brings men under a stern master to develop them in strength and skill, self-control and courage, endurance and persistent endeavor. It toughens men in every fiber and faculty of body and soul and makes them self-reliant and resourceful, masterful and victorious. It is the enemy of softness and effeminacy, indifference and laziness, of a life of ease and pleasure. Out of this strain and battle of competition come men who stand tall and four-square and rule the world. The pioneers and explorers and inventors, the captains of industry, the masters of science and literature and art, the statesmen who have shaped and ruled nations and the generals who have won battles, the prophets of mankind, the makers and topmost men of the world have usually risen on the steps of arduous competition. And so it is competition that makes men.

But does not competition make some men at the expense of other men and is not this the very selfish-

ness that is charged against it and that plants strife and cruelty in the very heart and constitution of the world? Unrestrained selfish competition does work injustice and cruelty among men and is one of the greatest evils in the world. And therefore it needs to be guided and regulated and restricted in our human world, and this is effected at various points and in increasing degrees by our growing legislation and public opinion and social customs and advancing moralization of our whole social order.

But nature herself has attended to this point and not left competition to run unchecked. She has not built her plan around the exclusive center of egoism, but has also built it around the pole of altruism. Competition is checked and balanced by coöperation. These are the two foci around which sweeps the full-orbed, beautiful curve of life. These twin principles everywhere pervade and control the world of life and modify and often transfigure its struggle for existence. Mother love is a strong and beautiful affection in the higher animals, and it will pay the last full measure of devotion; and the altruistic principle runs down through the whole constitution of nature. The cells of the very lowest organism work together in social colonies and serve one another. Service and sacrifice are everywhere woven

into the web of the world. Henry Drummond was the discoverer of this truth, or at least was the first to see it clearly and bring it out fully. In his book on *The Ascent of Man,* he shows that "the struggle for life" is balanced by "the struggle for the life of others," and that in the second of these two principles "lies a prophecy, a suggestion of the day of Altruism." "Take the tiniest protoplasmic cell," he says, "immerse it in a suitable medium, and presently it will perform two great acts — the two which sum up life, which constitute the eternal distinction between the living and the dead — Nutrition and Reproduction. At one moment, in pursuance of the Struggle for Life, it will call in matter from without, and assimilate it to itself; at another moment, in pursuance of the Struggle for the Life of Others, it will set a portion of that matter apart, add to it, and finally give it away to form another life. Even at its dawn, life is receiver and giver; even in protoplasm is Self-ism and Other-ism. These two tendencies are not fortuitous. They have been lived into existence. They are not grafts on the tree of life. They are not painted on the canvas, they are woven into it."

In poetic language he traces the evolution of this principle: "Love is not a late arrival, an after-

thought, with Creation. It is not a novelty of a romantic civilization. It is not a pious word of religion. Its roots began to grow with the first cells of life which budded on this earth. How great it is, the history of humanity bears witness: but how old it is and how solid, how bound up with the very constitution of the world, how from the first of time an eternal part of it, we are only now beginning to perceive. For the evolution of Love is a piece of pure science. Love did not descend out of the clouds like rain or snow. It was not distilled on earth. And few of the romances which in after years were to cluster around this immortal word are more wonderful than the story of its birth and growth. Partly a product of crushed lives and exterminated species, and partly of the choicest blossoms and sweetest essences that ever came from the tree of life, it reached its spiritual perfection after a history the most strange and checkered that the pages of Nature have to record. What Love was at first, how crude and sour and embryonic a thing, it is impossible to conceive. But from age to age, with immeasurable faith and patience, by cultivations continually repeated, by transplantings endlessly varied, the unrecognizable germ of the new fruit was husbanded to its maturity, and became the tree

on which humanity, society, and civilization were ultimately borne."

Evolution is thus not simply a tale of battle, but is also a love story. Down at the bottom of the world coöperation is wedded to competition, love is planted just as deep in the constitution of the world as life itself, and deeper, for it was Love in the eternal Heart of God that gave birth to life from its lowest cell up to man himself. Biology does not condemn the world to the doom of hopeless selfishness and strife, but breathes into life the breath of love; and thus there is planted in the very heart of the world the principle of a higher and better, a finer and more beautiful world.

A general answer to these and other objections to an optimistic view of the world is that we must get into right relations with an object or process in order that we may judge it truly. If we are studying a process we must look at its end and outcome and not simply at its beginning or middle. It is not just to judge a tree by its knotted root or bitter bud; we should judge it by its sweet and wholesome fruit. If we could have looked in upon this earth when it was "without form and void," a mass of molten rock or fiery vapor, or in upon the carboniferous age when the earth was a dense jungle in

which fearsome monsters "tare each other in their slime," we would have been frightened and paralyzed at the dreadful spectacle; and yet these were necessary preparatory stages in the long secular process that produced this verdure-carpeted, flower-embroidered, star-domed world, full of happy life. It would be blindness and folly to rush into the middle of such a process and condemn it as meaningless or evil and not wait to see its end and then see that in it everything was beautiful in its time.

A Jacquard loom is a marvelous mechanism and mass of wheels and springs and shooting shuttles, a thing of life; but as we look at its apparent confusion and are deafened by its noise, we may not understand its plan and motions and may even think it is meaningless and useless. Yet at the top we may see a perforated cardboard that contains a pattern that controls every wheel and flying shuttle and even every broken thread and that weaves the rich and beautiful fabric that issues from the machine below. The world is God's great loom, and we may stand bewildered before its mechanism and may think that it is all a muddle. But God has a plan in his eternal Mind that is controlling every part of the mechanism and even its broken and tangled threads, and he is working out his purpose and weav-

ing a rich and beautiful garment for every obedient soul.

Proper perspectives in space and time are necessary conditions of right judgment. If we stand close to a picture, such as the Sistine Madonna, we see no portrait, but only a daub of paint; but if we stand back at the proper point we see a heavenly vision. Around the inner circle of the dome of St. Peter's in Rome Michelangelo painted a series of symbolic pictures that constantly draw the gaze of admiring multitudes. If we were to go up and take a close look at them we would see coarse chunks of paint that would almost look like cobble stones in the street; but when we stand down on the floor three hundred feet below and look up at them, we seem to be gazing into heaven.

A German emperor once visited a city of his realm, and the inhabitants had kindled fires along the brow of the mountain overhanging the city so arranged that they spelled the world "Welcome." The men who were kindling and feeding those fires and were scorched in their flames could not read their meaning because they could not grasp them in their totality and relations; but to those down upon the plain they shone out as splendid significant letters of light.

The author happened to be at Chautauqua when the great organ in the auditorium, which had just been installed, was being tested and Clarence Eddy, the distinguished organist, was playing it. I first stepped inside the organ, which was a large room containing thousands of pipes ranging in size from tiny tin tubes to great wooden boxes thirty-two feet high and arranged in rows with alleys running through them like the streets in a town. Stepping into that organ was like entering into a boiler shop. It was all one thunderous roar punctuated with screams and shrieks that stabbed the ears as with daggers, and one felt like flying from the place as from a chamber of horrors. I then went outside and sat in the auditorium. The organ was being played by the same master, but out of it issued strains that seemed to float down from heaven. I had simply gotten into right relations with the instrument so that I could relate the sounds into harmony and melody.

This world is God's great organ and he is blowing his music through it, and we are inside of it and it often seems to us to be making a deafening roar pierced with outcries of pain, but this is because we are not in right relations with it. God is the Master Musician and we cannot yet relate the grand crash-

ing chords and trace the sweet tender melodies that his fingers wake into music on the keyboard of the universe. He has arranged the physical world so that its very constellations spell out sublime messages for us in letters of living light, but we cannot yet grasp them in their total significance. He is the Master Artist who is painting the canvas of the universe, but we are too close to it and may discern only splashes and daubs of color. But by and by when God's work is complete and when our education is finished we shall appreciate the divine masterpiece painted upon the canvas of the universe, we shall read the meaning that runs in letters of light along every mountain brow and blazes out in every constellation, and we shall relate all the sounds of earth and heaven into divine music.

The application of this principle will relieve many of the perplexities of life and will often help to lighten "the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world." We can interpret and understand history better after a hundred or a thousand years have passed away and set us in proper relation to its events. We are now too close to the Great War to understand it: the next generation or the third or fourth generation from ours will understand it better. We now can trace the purpose of

God in our Civil War because we are at such a distance from it that we can see that He was building a better America. We are often too close to our losses and sorrows to understand their meaning: time may make this meaning plain. Often we need to give heed to the voice of the Master: "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt understand hereafter."

We are often impatient and want to see the hour-hand and the century-hand of progress move in a minute or a month. But God moves his finger, as he writes the story of human progress, slowly, very slowly around the circle of the centuries and millenniums. This especially applies to the social order which progresses rarely by sudden revolution but regularly by slow evolution, like the secular geological changes of the earth. We must learn to wait on the Lord and be of good courage. Time holds in its bosom the roots of long-past yesterdays and the seeds of far-distant to-morrows, and we must have the patience and the courage of faith.

> The bud may have a bitter taste,
> But sweet will be the flower.

XIV

BUILDING THE NEW WORLD

We live in an unfinished world, and this fact is one of its most hopeful features. It is yet surrounded and cluttered up with much rude scaffolding and unsightly rubbish and presents to us an unfavorable if not forbidding appearance. The planet itself is still on the anvil of creation and is being hammered and carved and polished into shape and use. Equally is our human world still in the making. It is still plastic and rounding into form. It is not a static but a dynamic world. Good and evil are not passive but intensely active and are struggling for the victory. Every human being has a place in these contending ranks on the one or the other side, or, to speak more truly, the line of division between the opposing forces runs right through every one's own heart and life. God himself is not a spectator of this struggle, but is down in the thick of it, fighting with the forces of righteousness. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain, giving birth to a better world.

The world has been shattered by the Great War, and we are now setting out to rebuild it. It is admitted on all sides that we are now entering a new era, and there is a spirit of enterprise and eagerness to get at the task. All fields of life, industry, education, religion, the social order, national affairs and world politics, are experiencing a quickening breath as of spring. It is as though the world were in a vast melting pot and were about to be poured into new molds. Hope is rising high, and doubtless it will meet with many disappointments. We do well to share in this new spirit and should endeavor to seize the tide at its flood that it may bear us on to fortune. The way the shattered molten world cools and crystallizes in the next few years may shape its destiny for many centuries.

There are some developments or gains of the war which we should bring over as new ideals and energies into the task of rebuilding the world. One of these is the idealism of the war. This conflict was not fought through by the Allies for land or colonies or a larger place in the sun, but for justice and liberty. It was at bottom a battle between materialism and idealism, and idealism was victor. It was a contest between the schoolmasters of the world. The universities of Germany on the one side and of

England and France and America on the other, furnished the real weapons of this war. Men by the million left home and country and went forth to sacrifice and suffer and to lay down their lives for an idea, the great idea of democracy. It was a magnificent illustration and proof of the power of the human soul to make the supreme sacrifice that an idea may triumph. The new world is to be rebuilt along the lines of justice and liberty for all men in all relations, and this vision should be our guide and inspiration in the great tasks of the new era. Hitherto we have been building too much on material foundations and trying to unite the world and insure its peace by armies and warships and by commerce and growing prosperity, but this foundation has proved unsound and deceptive. Only spiritual foundations of truth and righteousness and brotherhood will really exalt the nations and consolidate the world so that it will hold together and weather all storms.

Idealism is one of the master forces of human life in all fields. A mother sees in her mind an ideal of a better home, and presently her own home begins to grow into new order and display new touches of taste and beauty until her ideal is realized or approximated. A farmer sees a vision

of a better farm, more thorough in its cultivation and more fruitful in its fields and orchards, and his own farm soon shows improvement and approaches his ideal. Men of genius are eminently the children of imagination and by this power produce all the glories of literature and art and all the great achievements of the race. The poet weaves his ideals into musical lines and fairy visions, the painter spreads his on canvas in forms of loveliness, the musician rolls his out on grand chords and sweet melodies, the sculptor frees his from a rough block of marble in angels of beauty, and the architect builds his into mighty cathedrals that have in them some of the majesty and mystery of mountains. So can idealism see the vision of a new world and then build according to its plans and specifications. Generations may dream of and toil upon the mighty task, but through the years it will approach the ideal and may at last stand complete. All true and good ideas and great ideals run up to God and find their meaning and power and completion in him, and the New World will rise to its highest idealism only as it is quickened by a divine breath and energized by the divine Spirit.

Another principle of the war that we should bring over into the new world is coöperation. The Allies

muddled through more than three years of war and made discouragingly small progress because they were divided in their counsels and armies, whereas their enemies were unified under the direction of a single leadership. But when the Allies were forced by the alarming state of affairs in March, 1918, to agree on a single supreme command and put all armies on all fronts under Foch, the tide immediately turned and never went back until the enemy were beaten to their knees, begging for mercy. It was an instance of coöperation on the grandest scale the world has ever seen, and it won the greatest military victory of all time. Obviously this principle is equally needed in the great enterprise of rebuilding the world. Divided counsels and forces are as fatal to success in this field as in the field of war. Industry by its very nature is a coöperation of many minds and hands and is efficient and productive only as it is pervaded and controlled by harmony. Education and religion depend upon the same principle. Local and national government call for still wider coöperation, and the League of Nations in whatever form it may finally be achieved must be based on this principle on a worldwide scale. Coöperation calls for leadership and loyalty; and we must find and develop competent leaders and have the patience and

loyalty to follow them in the stupendous, complex and trying task of rebuilding the world in a better form.

Still another gain of the war is a vastly liberalized spirit of giving, the devotion of our means to our cause. The war has cost our country about twenty billions of dollars, and the other Allies far greater sums. This amount of money, obtained by borrowing and taxation from our people, a few years ago would have been thought impossible and a wild dream or absurdity. Yet it was poured out with the greatest willingness and enthusiasm under the inspiration of the great cause.

Money is crystallized human energy. It is our time and toil transmuted into gold. It is our life blood minted into coin. As the sunlight has been stored up in the coal to be released, when the coal is burned, into light and heat to do work anywhere, so when we give money we give our stored up energy and life to be released in the cause to which we devote it. We pour our souls into its service. Money, therefore, is a necessary and powerful means for promoting any cause, and we must have it in vastly augmented amounts in our task of rebuilding the world. If hundreds of billions of dollars, a sum as unthinkable as the distance of the stars, were

spent in destroying a good part of the world, how much will be needed to rebuild it? If we willingly gave twenty billions to make the world safe for democracy, shall we now not as willingly give many millions and even billions to make democracy safe for the world? Hitherto we have only been playing at the matter of giving money for philanthropic, educational and religious causes: now we must go at this matter with serious determination and organize it as a business. All our idealistic agencies need greatly increased means for carrying on their work, and these means should be poured out without stint for the rebuilding of the idealized world. In a sense money won the war, and in the same sense money will win the world for Christ.

Still another asset of the war is the spirit of service and sacrifice that won it. This was the fundamental means that achieved this victory: not munitions but men and morale; not shells but souls. Men put their spirit and strength and skill, their patience and endurance and courage, their determination and devotion unto death into this conflict, and then the gates of hell could not stand against them. "The significance and the summons of the cross of Christ," says Dr. Robert E. Speer, "have been given new illumination by the war. Three of the great

principles embodied in the cross were dominant principles in the war — the principle of achievement through self-abandonment, the principle of inner freedom through consecration to an unselfish cause and the principle of vicarious suffering."

All our means can work and win in any field only as we put ourselves and very souls into them. Our task of rebuilding the world will call for service and sacrifice such as we have never yet consecrated to this work. We must cast our mere convenience and sense of ease to the winds and throw ourselves into this task with *abandon.* We must go into it as soldiers went into the camps and trenches. We must realize that we are come into the world not to be ministered unto but to minister. We gave splendid loyalty and service and sacrifice to the cause of the country and of the Allies in the Great War: let us now see and realize that an infinitely greater war is still going on right around us in which "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Shall we not give as splendid devotion to the kingdom of God in the world as we gave to world democracy? This is the appeal of the hour

to us who live in this great day. What men died for, we must now live for.

Prayer itself is a way of working. It is not a lazy easy way of getting God to do our work for us, or a begging and teasing him to bestow personal favors upon us, or to give us ready-made goods; it is not an escape from hard work and the burden and battle of the cross and a short-cut to blessings. Rather it is girding up our loins for the burden, a call to battle, a way of co-working with God. It opens a divine channel into which we are to pour our wills. "The prayer of the righteous man," says the Apostle James (5:16) as translated by Dr. Rendal Harris, "is of great force when energized." The meaning is plain. We must energize our prayers. Uttered without being energized, they may be only so much vain wishing and empty breath. But when we put our energies into them, turning our wish into work, such prayer "is of great force." God will then energize our prayer with his omnipotence, pouring his will into the same channel with our will. Prayer turns our words into sweat and blood and makes us mighty to the tearing down of strongholds of evil and in building the walls of righteousness. To pray aright is no light thing, uttering easy words

that drop from our lips as do the conventional words of society. Prayer is hard work, the intensest energizing of all our powers, the consecration of all our possessions, the utmost we can give and do, serve and sacrifice, to work out our prayers into deeds and fact. This truth was expressed by Dr. Chalmers when he said, "We are to pray as though God did all and then work as though we did all." When the will of God and the work of man thus coincide and flow in the same channel, prayer becomes a fact and a force that fills the soul with power and peace and gives it the victory that overcomes the world.

Idealism, coöperation, giving and service are thus four great assets of the war which we are now to bring over into the greater war against evil and into the task of rebuilding the world. War has a tremendous effect in stirring up the great deeps of a nation as a submarine upheaval brings up the depths of the sea, and the Great War has given an immense impulse to these spiritual gains which we are now to capitalize in the greater war from which there is no discharge. Lloyd George noted this effect of the war upon spiritual ideals in his famous Queen's Hall speech on September 19, 1914, when he said: "We have been living a sheltered life for generations. We have been too comfortable and too indulgent,

many, perhaps, too selfish, and the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for a nation — the great peaks we had forgotten, of Honor, Duty, Patriotism, and, clad in glittering white, the great pinnacle of Sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven." These snow-clad peaks now loom above us, and we are to utilize the streams that come from their heights to irrigate the plains of our life and make them blossom and we are to turn their energies into the channels of our activities. These ideals now shine as luminaries in our sky and we are to hitch our wagons to these stars.

These principles that have been so reinvigorated by the war are now to be wrought into the process of rebuilding the world. They are first to be applied to the physical world. Marvelous as has been the progress in this field in modern times, the mastery of nature has only begun and its most wonderful achievements are yet to come. Agriculture, the oldest art and science, is yet in its infancy. There will be developed more intensive and productive methods of farming, fertilizers will be more liberally employed, improved machinery will be invented, and new grains and fruits may be evolved. Transportation will be greatly improved by the building of

paved roads, the extension and improvement of railways and steamships, and by means of automobiles and trucks and airships, and trade and travel will be enormously increased. Manufactures will develop to an undreamed-of extent through inventions and improved processes and more efficient organization. Science will promote health through improved sanitation and the eradication of disease. Art will keep pace with all this progress in enriching and beautifying the world. And thus the world as a place of physical residence will be increasingly supplied with the means of material satisfaction, and humanity will be better fed and clothed and housed, and life will be ever more comfortable and beautiful.

This increasing dominion over nature must be brought and kept under subjection to moral and spiritual principles, or it will prove our ruin. It will only be a richer soil out of which will grow ranker and more deadly weeds of selfishness and strife, indulgence and dissipation and vice. After the manner of Frankenstein, it will create an enormous monster that may overpower and strangle humanity. Why do informed men fear to have another great war? Because they know that the terrible engines of destruction that were devised in the last war, submarines and airships and poison-

ous gas and long-range super-guns, were only crude precursors of vastly more frightful engines of death that will be developed in the next war. Near the close of the Great War American chemists had produced a poisonous gas about a hundred times more destructive and deadly than any that had been used. A few hundred pounds of this gas dropped out of an airship on New York or London or Berlin would blast and destroy the entire city, leaving not a living thing in it. These experts themselves tremble as they think of what mighty destructive forces they can let loose in the next war and warn us not to let it come. Our whole material civilization is a monstrous powder magazine that uncontrolled human selfishness can blow up in a world explosion that would shake the planet to its center. We must control it, or it will destroy us. The Hebrew prophets in their visions saw nature itself transfigured and spiritualized in the coming Messianic kingdom when "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." We are to carry out and fulfill this prophecy as we continue to extend the dominion of man over nature and raise it from the low level of merely using it as a means of making a living and redeem it from being a field of selfish and

often bloody competition and strife and lift it into the life of the spirit.

Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild sea's furying waters,
All with ineffable longing are waiting their invader,
Still when resisting and raging, in soft undervoice say unto him,
Fear not, retire not, O Man; hope evermore and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and the stars direct thee,
Go with the girdle of man, go and encompass the earth.
Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition and action.
With the great girdle of God, go and encompass the earth.

— *Arthur Hugh Clough.*

The industrial order is a field where continuous betterment is to be worked out through the principles of idealism, coöperation, liberality and service. This is a much more complex and difficult problem than the physical order and will require for its solution vastly more skill and patience and service and sacrifice. The chief point of difficulty in this problem is the distribution of the goods of production. The competition is between profits and wages, and this involves and awakens our instinctive sense of self-preservation for which men will blindly fight, and it keeps the industrial world in a state of unrest

and friction at times breaking out in collisions and violence.

Some better system of organizing the industrial world is a perpetual desire and aim of society. The two chief contending systems or theories are individualism or capitalism and socialism. Capitalism has long had the field and has in its favor the tremendous argument and advantage that it is the outgrowth and evolution of centuries of human experience; yet this does not guarantee its perfection, and that it has imperfections and glaring evils its most ardent advocates will admit. Socialism, by which is meant the collective ownership and operation of all capital and productive processes, attractive as it looks on paper and admirable as it often is in its main motive, in our judgment encounters practical difficulties and disadvantages and dangers that bar its way to adoption. Democracy, which applies to the entire political world, cannot be carried out to the same extent in the industrial world, for in this field it soon reaches practical limitations and checks as it begins to hinder individual initiative, restricts personal liberty, fails to impose and submit to self-discipline, develops into bossism and tyranny and throws the whole industrial order into the boiling pot of politics. Russia and Bolshevism are frightful

warnings of whereunto radical socialism and communism may go.

Yet any degree of government control of industry is so far socialistic, and such regulative legislation has made great advances and is likely to go much further. The increasing social sense of our time is causing society to feel its collective responsibility for the industrial order and more and more it will not leave it to individual action but will impose upon it its own broader conscience and larger will. Society must take care of its hand-workers, or rather it must furnish the fair conditions in which they can worthily take care of themselves. It may fix a minimum wage as the condition of decent living at the lower end of the scale and at the top virtually fix a maximum income by taking off the surplus by a graduated tax. It will go, we know not how far, for this must be worked out in experience, in the direction of the control if not the ownership of public utilities. It will enforce regulation of housing and sanitation and public health and may provide a system of insurance against unemployment and of old age pensions, and by such provisions it promises to adjust the industrial order into more equitable relations and freer opportunity and greater security for all classes. Coöperative and profit-sharing and

various other devices may modify the wage system. Profits and wages themselves are not essentially antagonistic and irreconcilable, but have fundamentally common interests and may be worked out into mutually satisfactory and harmonious relations. Trade unionism has won its rights and has come to stay. Collective bargaining will more and more prevail. The interests of labor have become one of the first considerations of government in most countries and have assumed a position of international importance and power in the League of Nations. "The select classes of mankind," said President Wilson at the Peace Conference at Paris on January 25, 1919, "are no longer the governors of mankind. The fortunes of mankind are now in the hands of the plain people of the whole world." This statement marks the arrival of the greatest revolution of history. It has long been coming silently, and now the Great War has brought it near to its climax and consummation. This means that the adjustment of the industrial order will be worked out not by the few but by the many.

Our chief task, next to that of justice, in the industrial order, demanding our most earnest thought and effort, is constantly to increase its humanization and spiritualization so as to give play to personality

and a larger and freer life. One of the deadliest dangers of industrialism is the monotony of drudgery that chains the worker to a fixed mechanical task having little variety and enlisting little intelligence and kindling little interest so that he is reduced to a cog in a machine. Such work stunts the whole man and breeds discontent and rebellion. One great amelioration of such labor is a shorter work-day that leaves time for rest and recreation. A larger alleviation to the drudgery that must attend much mechanical work is a general rise in the level of education and interest in the broader affairs of the world, in science, literature and art, and especially in the spiritual life that views the field of work from above and subordinates it to the life of the spirit. Excessive devotion to the means of making a living materializes life, whereas a higher ethical and spiritual life idealizes industry and makes the lowliest work of noble significance. When we link our work with God's work our whole world is lifted to a higher level and purer atmosphere and is touched with divine issues. Then the whole personality develops and comes into play and lives a worthy life. Our manual work should be only a part and a relatively small part of our total life, a little island that lies surrounded and enveloped in the wider sea and

higher atmosphere of our spiritual life. Many men in all walks of life, laboring men in the lowest and hardest ranks of toil as well as those in higher ranks, are now living in this larger and freer world of the spirit in which their personalities have full play and noble satisfaction. Much common and hard work will ever have to be done in this world, and we should use every means to promote the humanization and spiritualization of the lowest toil. The hope of the future lies in this direction in which all our work will lose its friction and drudgery and become that perfect work that is perfect play.

> When done beneath Thy laws,
> Even servile labors shine;
> Who sweeps a room as for Thy cause,
> Makes that and the action fine.
>
> — *George Herbert.*

This spiritualization is not only to be applied to manual labor but equally to all work and especially to wealth. Wealth is always a social product and should be so used as to contribute to social welfare. The theory that a man has a right to do as he arbitrarily pleases with his wealth in the sense that he may devote it merely to his personal selfish gratification is passing under growing social condemnation,

and the social obligation of wealth is being increasingly recognized and emphasized. We should, by education and the pressure of public opinion and by proper legislation, intensify the social sense that private property is in a degree a public trust and lift wealth along with manual labor into the sphere of the spirit.

It will throw a helpful light on the industrial order at this point to consider the teaching and attitude of Jesus with respect to the capitalistic industrial order of his day. He did not commit himself to it and tie up his gospel with it, and this is an instance of his marvelous wisdom: for had he thus committed himself and his gospel he would have identified himself with a local and temporary system which might pass away and carry him and his gospel along with it into obsolescence and oblivion. He kept himself free from this and all related fatal entangling alliances with the temporal and passing questions and conditions of his time.

Yet he did not condemn the industrial order in which he lived. He drew many of his illustrations and parables from the existing world of business with its employers and employees, capital and wages, which were then attended with injustice and disputes and violence as they are now, without any implica-

tion that there was anything fundamentally wrong with the system. But he did put his finger on the root of trouble in the industrial order when, after refusing to settle a lawsuit between two brothers, he said, "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness" (Luke 12:15), the admonition implying that this evil disposition in the heart was the root out of which the dispute over the property was only a sprout.

Jesus approached the social order from above, bringing down into it the purifying and controlling principles of justice and brotherhood, and lifting it to the level of co-working with God and thereby turning work into worship. And he also approached the social order from within, teaching that the main fact about a man is not his outer wealth but his inner worth, not his external position but his internal disposition. He thus spiritualized the social order without revolutionizing its form. He was interested, not in the methods of making money, but in making men, not in material products and power but in personalities. He proceeded on the principle that if we look after the moral and spiritual man the economic man will take care of himself.

These principles in the teaching of Jesus are luminously set forth and illustrated in Dr. F. G.

Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Social Question,* especially in the chapter on "The Industrial Order." "Jesus is a teacher," he says, "not of industrial mechanics, but of spiritual dynamics. The adjustment of economic conditions is, in each new age, a new problem of social mechanism, to be solved by new devices concerning which Jesus can have nothing to say; but the end for which these varying forms of social mechanism are devised is in all ages the same. It is the production of personality, the making of men."

Again he writes: "The pillars of modern industrial life are securely set in the moral stability of the vast majority of business lives. Millions of such persons, as they scrupulously discharge their business obligations, are meeting the demand of Jesus, 'Whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant'; and as they stoop to their obscure duties are obedient to his example, 'If I then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.' The Christian problem of the industrial world is to multiply lives like these. If any revolution in the industrial order is to overthrow the existing economic system, the new order must depend for its permanence on the principles of the teaching of Jesus; but if the prin-

ciples of the teaching of Jesus should come to control the existing economic system, a revolution in the industrial order would seem to be unnecessary."

The principles of idealism, coöperation, liberal giving and service next apply to the moral order. The ages have seen a progressive moralization of society, but all that has been achieved is only a beginning and the promise of what can now be done. The abolition of slavery from practically the whole world is probably the greatest single step in humanity the world has yet taken and is proof that the most strongly intrenched iniquity can be eradicated. The use of intoxicants is a twin evil, more widely spread and deeply rooted in mercenary interest and more destructive of manhood than slavery. The conscience of the world is getting aroused against this evil. Our own country has just achieved the victory of national prohibition and written it in its constitution after a hundred years of education and struggle. Only voices in the wilderness were at first heard in behalf of this reform, but these grew as group after group and agency after agency were attracted to the cause, until the final victory came almost in a day. No doubt the war helped to bring the cause to a speedier culmination, but it would have triumphed anyway. Science and education,

industry and politics, ethics and sociology and religion gradually united their forces against it until it gave way as a dam bursts before the rising flood. We believe this reform will work for a radical betterment of our country by cleansing it of this foul poison, relieving it of this cause and burden of poverty and vice and crime, and helping to lift men into sobriety and virtue. It puts us in the leadership of the world in this means of human improvement and it will help other peoples to attain the same victory.

Intemperance is not the only vice to be eradicated, and there are others that we must endeavor to uproot. Social purity, domestic faithfulness, personal truth and honesty, kindness and courtesy, and all the primary principles of human conduct and character must be inculcated and encouraged by every private and public means at our disposal. The level of morality has risen in the last century, and we have good ground for the hope that it will continue to rise in the future.

These principles must be applied to religion. Religion is the deepest source and highest form of idealism and service and sacrifice, and should respond most fully and fruitfully to the needs and demands of the new day. It always has been the primary source of idealism and it has been so even

through the Great War. Yet the problem of the readaptation of the church to the new era is a pressing one. It is easy and may be a bid for popularity simply to criticize and berate the church as though it were responsible for all social evils and world calamities, including even the savagery of the "beasts of Berlin." Some are asking not whether the world will tolerate the church in the new day, but whether Christianity itself will tolerate it. But the church has always been subjected to such criticism and has survived through centuries of hostility both from within and from without. Yet the church must not assume an attitude of indifference to criticism, much less of arrogant superiority to it, but rather should not only submit to it but sincerely welcome it.

Polity and ordinances, institutionalism and ritualism are necessary to religion, for ideas must have a body with hands and feet, the spirit cannot go naked through the world but must incarnate itself in an organism. Yet these forms have historically been one of the greatest dangers of religion, incrusting it over and constricting its inner life, killing its spirit with the letter. We should aim to make the form elastic so that it will adapt itself to the spirit, as the skin shapes and adapts itself to the body.

This readjustment of religion will penetrate to its doctrines, for these cannot be sealed and kept immune against the new spirit in the air. Old truth in all fields is ever evolving into new, and religious truth is constantly illustrating this law. The old doctrines are not to be discarded, for they are rooted in reality, but they are to be developed and adapted to fit the new conditions. They ever have been and must be adjusted to and harmonized with, enlarged and illuminated by advancing human knowledge. In general they are to be brought into closer relation to concrete life so that they will bear directly and vitally on existing conditions and duties. The preaching of the pulpit must be humanized and made more practical and helpful. The day for discussing doctrines in the pulpit as theological propositions is gone. These are only the bones of our Christian faith and when dissected out from and denuded of the living flesh and warm blood of daily life they become a rattling skeleton that has lost all power to interest or frighten anybody. The preaching of Jesus cut loose from the orthodox abstractions and dry, dreary droning of the scribes and Pharisees, and made religion as interesting and practical, as vivid and vital as business and bread, and so it fell as

showers of rain on parched ground and the common people heard him gladly. More than ever before the pulpit must preach a pragmatic living gospel that goes into the heart and pulses in the blood.

The problem of Christian unity and church union is an increasingly urgent one. There has been a great advance in the spirit of Christian unity among the churches so that our Protestant denominations have attained full and fine fellowship. This spirit is to be cherished so that it will widen and deepen and take in other communions and in time embrace all Christian bodies, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Greek. Church union is a more difficult problem. The many divisions of Protestantism are attended with friction and rivalry, waste and inefficiency, and every effort should be made to reduce the number of these bodies. The first step in this direction is the uniting of denominational families, such as the Methodists or the Presbyterians, and this would give us four or five large bodies that might then federate in practical unity. Coöperation is greatly needed in this field so that our churches may be strong organizations meeting the real needs of their communities. The growing spirit of church unity gives promise of accumulating such volume and pressure as will draw

affiliated denominations closer together and sooner or later will cause some of them to merge as drops of water when they touch melt into unity.

It may be doubted, however, whether the growing spirit of Christian fellowship can or should ever result in general church union. The Master's prayer, "that they all may be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," commonly pleaded as a reason for church unity, does not appear to have had any such end in view, but was a prayer for spiritual unity among believers. A common polity or organization did not unite the first Christian churches, and such an organization grew up afterwards and finally attempted to exercise its sway over all churches. But such unity soon developed its disadvantages and dangers, and Christendom divided into the Eastern and the Western branches. Western Christendom under the centralization of Roman Catholicism attained complete organic unity, but in time it developed such tyranny and corruption as shattered it in the Reformation. If all our Protestant denominations should be merged in one organization, the same logic would require the same union of all the churches in the world, and such an

organization would develop its own evils and break down of its own weight. The organic union of all the churches in the world in one body is no more practicable or desirable than is the like organic union of all the peoples of the world in one nation. True Christian unity is not outer but inner, not of the body but of the soul, not mechanical but vital, not political but biological and spiritual.

In the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York are seven chapels arranged around the apse in each one of which worship is conducted in a different language. It would not conduce to the intelligibility and order of the service to remove these partitions and merge the polyglot congregations in one; and yet they are all gathered under one roof and are integral parts of the same grand cathedral; and they worship the same Lord and Christ. So may our denominations be viewed as chapels in which we worship in a somewhat different tongue or accent. No doubt there are too many partitions; some of them have been torn down; others of them are growing thin and seem about to crumble. But no doubt many of them will long endure, at least in the interest of geographical and national boundaries and of spiritual order and harmony and efficiency. Denominations have their dangers, but we would

abolish them probably at the risk and cost of greater dangers. Different outer organizations, however, need not hinder the inner spiritual unity for which Christ prayed and which should bind all Christians into fellowship.

The chief application of our ideals to the churches is to bring their power to bear more directly and vitally on the world as a social organism. They have hitherto been largely individualistic in their preaching and application of the gospel, and this principle has been proper and will ever remain primary. The individual is the social unit, and the regeneration of the individual must ever precede the regeneration of society. We first must get better people before we can get a better world. "The soul of improvement," said Horace Bushnell, "is the improvement of the soul." But people cannot become much better unless they use their improvement in the improvement of others. The soul is a social growth, and we can develop our own personality only as we also develop that of others. The gospel is an intensely social blessing, and we can get it in any large degree only as we give it. It multiplies in us as we impart it to others, as did the bread in the hands of the disciples beside the Galilean sea.

The spirit of democracy, which is the dominant

note of the new day, must be thoroughly infused into the church, or its doom will be upon it. It must either go before or else fall behind this onward march. This means that our religious conceptions and conduct must be completely democratized, broadened out into the whole life of the people and made to override and in a sense obliterate mere social distinctions. The caste spirit is often obviously present and prominent if not dominant in the church. The members have it in their hearts and have subtle but effective ways of showing it. Some churches appear virtually to have doors of wire netting that act like sieves to sift out people and let in those of a certain type or class, those that move in the same social circle or that are of congenial tastes and temperament; and when others get in through the wires they are made to feel by the very atmosphere of the place that they are not wanted. It is possibly true that if Jesus were to appear to-day unknown in his carpenter's clothes in some churches in which he is ostensibly and ostentatiously worshiped he would be given the cold shoulder and even might be unceremoniously thrust out. Such churches are really gilded social aristocratic clubs. Children, who are so sensitive to and absorbent of the unconscious influences that play upon them, do not always,

as they should, have instilled into them in Christian homes and in the Sunday school the Christian idea and spirit of equality before God and brotherhood among men, but often catch the caste spirit of social superiority and pride right in the Christian home and church. This spirit is deadly disloyalty to Christ, and we should strive by every means of teaching and example to uproot and banish it. Socialism, with all its visionary schemes and methods, is often more democratic and altruistic than the Christian church, and this should put the church of Jesus the carpenter to shame. The church of Christ is not a social club. It is not for the rich or for the poor, not for the cultivated and refined or for the illiterate and disreputable, but it is just for people, for sinners, for every one whom the Father loves and for whom Christ died. The kingdom of God is by its very nature the most democratic institution and society in the world, and in this new democratic day the church should be foremost in realizing this ideal.

Especially must the church apply the gospel to all the social problems and perils of the changing conditions now upon us. It must in a large degree forget itself and lose its life in saving the world. The petty business of saving its own sanctity and

orthodoxy in isolation from the world should be dropped, and the church should do as Jesus did, go about doing good and lay down its life for the world. This is the meaning of the new call to social service that is now going out through the churches. This is not a new gospel but only a new application of the old gospel. Jesus himself preached a social gospel. His first recorded sermon was on the text, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." A more vivid and intense social text could not be found in the Old Testament, and the whole ministry of Jesus was a concrete exposition and application of this text and sermon. He called men out of various social conditions and ranks, workingmen and capitalists and public officials and scholars, to be his disciples, and he went about doing good, feeding the hungry and healing the sick and ministering to all the physical as well as the mental and spiritual needs of men. He freely mingled with all classes and conditions of society, rich and poor, cultured and illiterate, respectable and disreputable, religious and irreligious,

and gave them equal invitation and welcome into his kingdom. He touched all shores and sounded all deeps of human society and yet kept himself unspotted, as the sunlight slips through the murky atmosphere and falls on mud and slime and yet is unstained in its purity. Jesus was eminently and intensely social in his teaching and life and gave the world a social gospel.

Some church leaders appear to be shy of the social gospel or opposed to it because they think it is a secularized gospel, or a way of reducing the gospel to mere charities and secular reforms. But this is not its aim and spirit and is a mistaken view. Social service means a broader and deeper and not a narrower and a superficial gospel. Its great idea and motive is that God so loved the world that he sent his Son not to condemn but to save the world. Social service is simply thinking and living the gospel in social terms. It would apply the gospel, not simply in spots or to social strata, especially not merely within the walls of the churches, but to the whole body of the people and infuse it into the industrial and political as well as the moral and spiritual life of the world. Too often God has seemed to be a tribal God in particular nations and a denominational God in particular communions. God

has been lost within the credal and social walls of some of our churches. We must get the gospel out into the community and God out into the world, widening out the walls of our churches and of our denominations to the horizon and around the equator and building the kingdom of God in the world.

The writer may be pardoned a concrete illustration out of his boyhood recollections. There was in the town a poor, motherless, demented boy who ran the streets in rags, swearing and screaming as other boys and some men would tease and torment him and laugh at his pitiful anger and agony. What were the preachers in that town doing in those days? They were preaching abstract theological doctrines and warning us boys against going to the circus. But not a minister or elder or church member ever took any action or thought he had anything to do about that boy. There was not enough social Christianity in that town to care for him or even think about him. Such a thing would now hardly be possible in any Christian town because we have developed a Christian sense of social responsibility for the welfare of the community as a whole and not simply of the church members.

Let us take an illustration out of the life of Jesus. Three disciples went with him up to the mount of

Transfiguration and were entranced with the vision as they saw the Master steeped in splendor, and there they wanted to stay; but that was no place to stay: Jesus quickly hurried them down to the plain where was a poor demoniac boy to be healed, and he spoke the word of power which the disciples were impotent to speak, "and the boy was cured from that hour." He did not unveil his glory for his own delectation or exaltation or simply for the gratification of his disciples, but he was transfigured as a revelation of his divine power to save, and he immediately transmuted that great white splendor on the mountain top into a shining stream of healing which he poured down upon the sick and troubled world below, even as mountains melt their dazzling white snowdrifts upon their summits and slopes into streams which they send down to irrigate the plains and make them rejoice and blossom as the rose. The application is plain. We go up into the church to see the transfigured Christ, and we may be enraptured by the vision and want to stay: but the church is no place to stay; we also must quickly go down into the world where are many sick and troubled folk to be healed and pressing social problems and perils to be met.

So also the disciples had a blessed season of fel-

lowship with the Master in the upper chamber in Jerusalem the night before the crucifixion, and perhaps again they wanted to stay; but again that was no place to tarry, "and when they had sung a hymn, they went out"; they went out into the night, into the hostile world, into the garden of agony and on to the cross. They went out with the new spirit they had caught from the Master to cleanse the world and rebuild it into the kingdom of God. So we go up into the church to hold blessed fellowship with Christ and then we sing a hymn and go out; out into the world, back into the home with all its duties and drudgery, back into business with all its toil and temptation, back into society with all its tainted atmosphere and fascinating allurements, back into the social order with all its injustices and ominous perils and possibilities, that we, having been baptized with the spirit of Jesus, may infuse it into the world and transform it into his kingdom.

Let us take still another illustration from the life of Jesus. When he was riding on his triumphal procession into Jerusalem and had reached the summit of Mount Olivet where the city suddenly broke upon his view, "he saw the city and wept over it." With what wonder and amazement must his disciples have seen his tears and heard his sobs? Why

should Jesus weep over Jerusalem, especially when we consider the beauty of the spring scene, the sacredness of the city and the joyousness of the hour? Let him go and weep great hot tears over apostate Samaria and pagan Rome, but over Jerusalem, the chosen city of God, shall not his hands be lifted in benediction and his face beam with joy? But "when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it." Why? Because beneath all the superficial splendors and hypocritical religiousness of the city he saw into its sinfulness and guilt and coming destruction, and the sight and thought drew tears from the Son of God and caused him to break down and sob like a child. And if we could only see deep enough into this world, into its magnificent material civilization and even into its religiousness, we would see reason for tears.

But what did Jesus do after his weeping? Did he simply spill his tears upon the ground and then pass on? Were his tears a kind of emotional sentimental luxury? No, he did something that gave practical expression to his emotions. He turned his weeping into working, his tears into toil, his sympathy into service, and his sorrow into salvation. He went over into that city and up into its temple and drove out the thieves and robbers that were

desecrating it and turning its worship into mercenary mockery. He went into the city and faced its hypocritical and false church members and doctors of divinity and theological professors and denounced them in fearless and unsparing and splendid scorn. He set about the religious and social and political reform of that city, he cleaned up that town. And then he laid down his life outside its walls that he might redeem that city and all the cities of the world. This was social service carried to its highest degree of sacrifice and saving power. All social service costs, and Jesus Christ paid its price.

Emotion must always be turned into motion, feeling into action, sympathy into service, or it is wasted and only weakens us. The psychologists warn us against the evil effects of indulging in emotions that are not turned into action; such wasted emotions wither and harden the sensibilities and paralyze the will, as in the case of the Russian lady who sat weeping in the theater at fictitious suffering on the stage while cruelly indifferent to her coachman freezing to death as he waited for her outside. We are disposed to think that if we feel good in the church we are good. Nothing may be more deceptive. The comfortable feeling may be due to the cushioned seats and beautiful surroundings, or to the spell of

the music; even the preaching, sometimes, makes us feel good. But whether we are good or not depends, not on how we feel in the church, but on what we are and what we do after we go out. Are we any the more unselfish and patient and kind and courteous in the home, or the more honest and honorable in business, and do we keep ourselves the more unspotted from the world, and especially do we go out to reform the city and state and to cleanse and rebuild and beautify the whole social order into the kingdom of God? Simply feeling good may be no good at all. Some people enjoy pathetic feelings, even tears, as an emotional luxury, and think they can substitute sentimentalism for saintliness. But such goodness is good for nothing and will never be counted unto anybody for righteousness. It is only as we turn our good feelings as streams of energy into service and transmute our tears into toil that we are followers of Jesus Christ and live and apply his social gospel. In vain do we weep over the city and over the world if we do not also work for their redemption.

The social gospel simply means that the principles and spirit of Christ are to be carried down and out into all the conditions and classes and agencies and activities of society and infused into them so that

they will be spiritualized and Christianized. Business is to be Christianized, and any business that refuses or fails to conform to the ethics and spirit of Christ is to be put out of business. The city is to be Christianized in its houses and streets and sanitation and amusements. Education is to be Christianized. Politics is to be Christianized. "Holiness unto the Lord" is to be inscribed on the very bells of the horses. The leaven of Christianity is to leaven the whole mass of humanity, and the great prophecy of Revelation is to be fulfilled, "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ."

The principles of idealism, coöperation and sacrifice apply to the problems of the world as a whole. The world has grown into unity and solidarity in our day as never before, and this opens the widest field for our new tasks and hopes. Christianity has never wholly lost view of its world program, and foreign missions has ever been a star that has led it on as it lured Paul from Asia into Europe. In modern times this vision has seized the heart of the church and inspired it to plant its posts on every continent and island of the sea. And the achievements of this work have been of the highest promise, and foreign missions to-day is just entering on

its worldwide march and victory. It is really a broader and deeper enterprise than the world League of Nations, for it seeks to cover the planet around the equator and from pole to pole and to penetrate into the ethical life and spirit of all people. This is the kingdom of God on earth which is to gather into itself all the kingdoms of this world. This work is just in its infancy and is one of the most optimistic facts in our outlook upon a better world. The heart of Christendom is in this task, its most gifted men and its means are behind it, and we are to push it with increasing breadth and depth and consecration and energy.

One of the greatest tasks ever laid upon humanity is now in our hands in the formation and development of the world League of Nations or long dreamed-of Parliament of Man. This is the greatest opportunity and legacy the Great War has left us, such an opportunity as the world has never had before and may not have again in a hundred or a thousand years. The world has been fused in the war and is now plastic and ready to be molded into new form. It is as though "this sorry scheme of things" had been "shattered to bits," and now we have the opportunity to "remold it nearer to the heart's desire." Already the great democratic

nations of the world have been forged and welded in the fires of the war into a union bound by ties of blood that are stronger than any treaties or scraps of paper and that will not again be dissolved. Under the magnificent world leadership of President Wilson they have framed at Paris and signed at historic Versailles a covenant that may mark one of the greatest epochs of history and may put its impress on the whole future course of mankind. Only its foundations have been laid and its outlines roughly shaped, and only through long experiment and patience and slow development can it be brought to completion. Generations may toil on it, as they did on the mighty cathedrals of Europe, before the capstone is laid with world shoutings, "Grace unto it." But already it affords protection and peace, and the free peoples and especially the common people of the world are determined that this war shall not have been fought in vain and that its blood shall be the price and the cement of this world temple of peace.

And what a powerful means this will be of building the better world! The mere stoppage of war will be an immense relief to a war-weary world. This fearful cloud that so often darkens our sky and threatens to break into an appalling storm of

destruction and death will finally roll from the heavens. The terrible burden of military preparation will drop from the backs of the nations. Nations will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: that is, they will turn, as they are even already doing, their munition factories and terrible engines of destruction into the means of peaceful and productive industry. The land and the sea and the air will no longer be planted and poisoned with devilish devices of death, but will be pure and free as God made them. No terrible "song of hate" will vex the very air. Brotherhood will bind all peoples into a great common life of trade and travel, ideas and idealism. All seas will kiss each other and all shores touch in the exchange of goods and all beneficial services. The children of men will realize that they are one family and live in mutual peace and prosperity.

One of the hardest tasks in realizing this ideal will be to reduce nations into subordination to true internationalism. For ages men have been building up their individual nations and intensifying and glorifying their patriotism, and no nerve has been more sensitive and irritable than their "national honor." This has made nations suspicious and

jealous of one another, loaded them up with armaments, erected bristling forts around their boundaries, brought them into frequent collisions, and been the powder that has exploded in most of the wars of the world. But just as we have suppressed private war between citizens within the nation by subordinating the individual to the nation, so must we now abolish war between nations by subordinating them to a world organization or international federation. It may be difficult for nations to come to this, for national patriotism is deep and proud and persistent and its supersensitive honor will die hard. And of course we do not want to kill proper patriotism, for it will ever have its place and preciousness; but we shall and must be willing to subordinate it to the broader interest and control of the world, or we shall ever be exposed to war and at times plunged into its most frightful forms. Nationalism must in a degree be subordinated to internationalism; this, indeed, in a measure is done in every international treaty, and it is now being realized in a large degree in the world league. World citizenship will be the attainment of the future. The splendid line of the Roman poet will then become a universal human sentiment: "I am

a man, and nothing relating to man is foreign to me." This again is the brotherhood of man and the kingdom of God on earth.

We are now in the midst of the process of building the better world, and it is not surprising that we cannot see all that is going on and grasp the totality. There is much about it that we do not understand and at many points we do not know what to do. We must necessarily feel our way along and often find out what will work by experiment. Often we fail at one point or by one method and must try another. We have no paper program that is an infallible guide, no plans and specifications for the new world from foundation to finish. We may go blundering along and muddling through our task and often be disappointed and apparently defeated. But this is the way the world has always gotten along. Columbus had his mistaken notions and dark days, but he arrived: not at his intended goal, which was poor, old China, but at something vastly better than anything he had ever dreamed of, young, rich, splendid America! Abraham Lincoln held to his purpose through the dark days of the Civil War, and he not only preserved the Union, which he set out to do, but he also struck the shackles from an enslaved race; he also builded

better than he knew. We are now working amidst the scaffolding and rubbish and apparent chaos of a half-finished structure, but the walls are rising towards the cornice and capstone, and we have good grounds for the faith that the completed temple of humanity in some distant to-morrow will exceed our utmost visions and dreams.

This world is man's problem, put into his hands to subdue to his dominion and build into order and beauty and blessing. It rolls a fearful burden on his shoulders and he may well stagger under it and at times have doubts and feelings of discouragement and despair. But the very greatness of the task calls out his supremest powers and thereby gives promise of success. It is sometimes easier to undertake and even to accomplish a great task than a small one, or to bear a great sorrow than a mere annoyance, as it was easier for Christ to bear the agony of the garden than for three of his disciples to lose a night's sleep. The trivial task merely irritates without arousing us, while the great trial challenges us and calls forth our utmost interest and effort. When an English statesman said to Cavour, "Why do you aim at anything so great as the unity of Italy? You can never reach it. Why not concentrate on something practicable, such

as the reform of the kingdom of Naples?" Cavour answered: "I cannot get the reform of Naples, because no one is ready to die for it; I can get the unity of Italy, because thousands of Italians are ready to die for it." Millions of men already have died in the Great War to lay the foundations of the new world, and now we are to rise to the great task and carry it forward. Napoleon thought in continents and spoke in thunderbolts. We are to think in world dimensions and work with the dynamic of world forces.

We have the power to do this. The world is not a static fact or fixed fate that no human power can alter, but a plastic mass which we can shape to our own ideal. We can

> Fix perfect homes in the unsubstantial sky,
> And say, What is not shall be bye-and-bye.

William James's "Will to Believe" here comes into play. "There are," he says, "cases where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming," and "where faith in a fact can help create the fact." "Often enough our faith beforehand in an uncertified result *is the only thing that makes the result come true*. . . . If your heart does not *want* a world of moral reality, your head

will assuredly never make you believe in one. . . . This life *is* worth living, we can say, *since it is what we make it, from the moral point of view.* . . . I confess that I do not see why the very existence of an invisible world may not in part depend on the personal response which any one of us may make to the religious appeal. God himself, in short, may draw vital strength and increase of being from our fidelity. For my own part, I do not know what the sweat and blood and tragedy of this life mean, if they mean anything short of this." This is the truth that Bergson sets forth in his "élan vital" in his *Creative Evolution* and Nietzsche in his *Will To Power,* and that runs as a current through our modern philosophy. It is the creative urge in us that drives us on to loftier attainments. It is the power in us by which we seize the very planet and carve it to our idealized shape and purpose and recast our civilization into "sweeter manners, purer laws," and mold man himself into "the valiant man and free, the larger heart, the kindlier hand." We are setting out on no quixotic task in the work of building a better world, but are doing with our might what our hands have been given to do. We are bidden to "launch out upon the deep," and we must not be afraid of deep water and stormy seas, but we should

> Push off, and sitting well in order smite
> The sounding furrows; for our purpose holds
> To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
> Of all the western stars, until we die.
>
> — *Tennyson.*

This world is also God's problem. He did not roll it out of his hand and give it no further concern, but kept it in his hand and close to his heart. Even when it wrecked itself in its sin he did not abandon it in despair and let it go staggering to its doom, but he went to work on it to redeem it; he is cleansing and developing and educating it to an ever higher degree of morality and spirituality. We may draw an illustration from geology. The geologist sees this earth as it was in the beginning, a vast weltering mass of molten rock. It seemed an unpromising beginning, but God put that immense ingot on his anvil and began to forge it into shape and use. Slowly through long ages he condensed its vapors into seas and carved its continents and clothed it with vegetation and thus fitted it up for the habitation and dominion of man. We see the same process going on in our human world. God took the Hebrew people when they were a wandering tribe of Bedouins and put them to school in Egypt and then transplanted them to their promised

land and trained them into clearer truth and higher spirituality so that they became the religious prophets of the world.

God is now carrying on the same process with the world at large. His Spirit envelops and permeates it so that he is constantly working in and upon all nations so as to break the fetters of ignorance and superstition and custom and let in new light and cause the world to grow into ever higher moral and spiritual life. This process is seen in the dominant world forces to-day. Commerce, democracy, education, brotherhood, the League of Nations, and especially Christianity are the fingers of God with which he is molding the world into form and fashioning it into a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

And so this world is at once the common problem and joint burden of man and God. Its staggering load rests upon our shoulders, but he has his shoulder under the same "heavy and weary weight." He is immanent in it and struggling with us in all its forces and activities and conflicts to redeem and cleanse and rebuild it. "We are laborers together with God." This is the fundamental fact in the optimistic view of the world. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" He

has launched this planet-ship out upon the infinite deep of his power and wisdom and love and will not permit it to be wrecked but will steer it to the harbor of his purpose. We have an instinctive and unshakable faith that God would not begin a work and not finish it. "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." On this rock we rest. In the light of this faith we face the future. However dark the world is to-day it will be brighter to-morrow and will come to its noon. St. John saw the holy city coming down from God to earth out of heaven: this city we are now building; already we are rearing its jeweled walls around our horizon and laying its golden pavements right under our feet. This is the meaning of all our work and worship, and we have faith that our labor is not in vain but will be crowned with victory.

The new age stands as yet
  Half built against the sky,
Open to every threat
  Of storms that clamor by;
Scaffolding veils the walls,
And dim dust floats and falls,
As moving to and fro, their tasks the masons ply.

— *William Watson.*

XV

ALL THINGS WORKING TOGETHER FOR GOOD

Our various paths of reasoning on our subject have been mounting and converging towards Paul's grand climax when he declared, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." On this sunlit summit faith stands far above the shadows and storms of earth, secure and serene in the light and the love of God; and this principle may serve to unify and summarize our several lines of thought.

We cannot indeed grasp this truth in its breadth and depth and height, any more than we can grasp a mountain within the hand or dip up the ocean with a cup; but we can rest on the mountain and out of the ocean we can fill our little cup full.

Our principle starts with a simple proposition and runs on into infinite complexities and deeps. "We know that all things work," is its starting-point. In the whole creation nothing is still. The atoms that seem locked so solidly together in the block of granite or bar of iron are in ceaseless violent ac-

tivity. The earth that seems to lie so fixed under our feet is rotating on its axis and flying along its orbit, and all the stars are circling in their courses. A drop of water under the microscope is seen to be densely inhabited with living creatures, all actively working. Man is working in every field of thought and action, angels of light and of darkness are working in the unseen world, and God himself is a busy God.

Our principle now mounts to a higher point of view: "All things work together." The scene of universal activity and apparent confusion is resolved into universal harmony. There are no isolated or discordant facts and forces in the universe, but all things are linked and woven into unity. This is strikingly illustrated in nature. What a wide and complicated interplay of forces is there around a blade of grass or a wayside flower? The soil out of which it grows, the rocks under the soil down to the molten core of the globe, the atmosphere, the clouds, tiny raindrops and mighty rivers, mysterious physical and chemical and vital forces are all working together that that blade of grass may grow, that that little flower may bloom. Further, the flower connects the earth with the sun, and how wonderfully do earth and sun work together? A

violent storm in the sun stops the working of our telegraph wires. "We cannot study a snowflake profoundly," says Professor Tyndall, "without being led back step by step to the sun." The radiation of every star enriches the hawthorn's bloom, and who shall say that the perfume of the rose is not grateful to the constellations? All suns and systems are knit together by the delicate but powerful cords of gravitation so that the fall of a grain of sand on this earth shocks the universe and jars the most distant star.

Our whole human world is woven by physical and psychological and social filaments into an organism that throbs with a common life. There are no isolated human beings any more than there are isolated atoms in the world, and all the millions of humanity, through trade and travel, through ideas and influences diffused around the earth like the atmosphere, consciously or unconsciously work together. And thus the total universe from center to circumference is one cosmos in which sorrowing souls and starry systems work together, wheel within wheel from gnat to Zodiac, in beautiful harmony.

Our principle now mounts to the highest point of view: "All things work together for good."

Universal harmony is now resolved into universal beneficence. The universe is not only built and controlled by a wise Mind and a powerful Hand, but at its center there beats a loving Heart. This is the highest flight of philosophy and the most daring utterance of faith. If this be true, we have reached an optimistic view of the world.

There are many directions in which we see how things work for our good. For us the sun shines and the rivers flow, and field and garden and orchard burst into bloom and bear fruit. In our human world all the processes of the production and exchange of goods contribute to our welfare. The farmer raises grains and fruits and the manufacturer makes goods for us. Millions in other lands are toiling for us. Europe sends us clothes and jewelry and perfumes, China sends us rice and silks, India tea, Africa ivory and gems, and the islands of the sea spices and precious woods. And thus every ship that sails the sea and every train that speeds along its track carries goods that it will unload at our door and that will presently appear in our homes. We literally stand at the center of the world and streams of goods flow in upon us from every quarter of the horizon.

See, also, how all explorers, discoverers, inven-

tors, thinkers, artists, poets, prophets, and all men of genius work for us. Columbus set sail upon the unknown Atlantic and landed us on these shores. How wonderfully did the inventor of the printing press work for us? and Watts in inventing the steam engine, Fulton the steamship, Stevenson the locomotive, Howe the sewing machine, Morse the telegraph, Bell the telephone, Edison the electric light, and Wright the airship enormously widened and enriched our world. Dickens portrayed the joys and sorrows of the world that we might laugh and cry. Tennyson wrote the "In Memoriam" and gave a voice to our grief. Michelangelo painted "The Last Judgment" and Mozart wrote his symphonies for us, for although we may not have seen or heard these masterpieces of art, yet their influence has reached and enriched our lives.

And who shall enumerate and evaluate the deeper common blessings of life, bread and work, home and affection and friendship, sympathy and service, ideals and aspiration, and the gospel and kingdom of Christ in which God is doing his best for us? These blessings flow around and envelop us like the atmosphere and are the very breath of our life; and they pour in upon us from every quarter of the world. Are we not beginning to see that all

things work together for our good and can we not say, with the psalmist, "My cup runneth over"?

But this beneficent bright side of the world is quickly overshadowed by its dark side. Nature that on the one side smiles upon us so kindly on the other is sharper than any sword. The lightning smites with instant death, and the tornado mows its destructive path with equal ruthlessness through forest and village. The earthquake crushes the rocky ribs of the globe, engulfing cities or spilling them into the sea, and the volcano pours its molten flood out over thickly populated plains. Disease germs lurk everywhere, like the millions of demons in which pagans believe, and unseen assassins fill the very air we breathe. And poverty and vice and crime, temptation and trial, suffering and sorrow, famine and pestilence and war, as we have seen, make the world appear to be one great muddle of misery so that we may be tempted at times to think that it is a colossal cruelty and wild dream of insanity and that it would be better for some kindly comet to come and sweep it away. We can see how many good things work for us, but how can these evil things in any sense or degree work for our good?

This problem will ever remain too much for our

little minds, and often must we exclaim with the psalmist, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." Yet, as we have already seen, there are points of view from which we catch gleams of light on this stony sphynx of evil that lifts its hard face in the midst of this fair world and refuses to unseal its lips of mystery.

For one thing, we must note a tremendous exception which Paul introduces into his statement of the principle we are considering. "We know," he says, "that all things work together for good to them that love God." This principle does not override and obliterate eternal moral distinctions and destinies. It does not wipe out the Ten Commandments and uproot the moral foundations of the universe. The prophet still bids us cry, "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for what his hands have done shall be done unto him." The universe is bound to maintain its integrity and respectability, and even a God of love must also be a God of justice.

There is no mystery at this point. The same government that protects its loyal citizens destroys those that rebel against it. The same train that

carries its passengers in speed and safety to their destination crushes him who stands upon its track. The same sunlight that causes a living plant to bloom decomposes into dust one that is dead. And so the same universe and system of providence and divine love that causes all things to work together for good to them that love God necessarily causes them to work against those that violate the laws of life and love. The universe is organized in the interest of righteousness and against evil.

And therefore we cannot include our personal sins in the "all things" that work for our good, for by the very act of wilfully sinning we step outside of the circle of this promise and array all things against us. The sins of the world, the sins of other people, may work for our good, but our own sins — never! No one can then say — and there is something plausible and fascinating in the temptation —"I will commit this sin, I will get this gain, I will have this pleasure, and then God will overrule it to my good," for by the very act of choosing the sin he ceases to love God and arrays the universe against himself.

"To them that love God." How much comfort there is in these words! Not for the great and the rich and the strong do all things necessarily work

together for good, but for the humblest soul that loves God. And every one can step within the golden circle of this truth and be secure and serene in its promise. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

But still the question recurs and presses upon us, How can the evil things of the world work for our good? We have already traced the working of some principles that throw light upon this question. Human responsibility and guilt, the laws of justice and penalty, good out of evil, our human childhood in process of development, the principle of divine evolution at work through long ages, the end as the necessary justification of the beginning and course of every process — these have already been explicated and applied to our problem. Reason finds various roads by which it reaches the bright summit of an optimistic world. But these roads are generally long and toilful, and are there not shorter paths to this consummation? We believe there are, and we briefly indicate three in as many words.

The first word is God. "In the beginning God!" That settles everything down to the last atom of the universe, as the center settles every point on

the circumference. If there be a God at all, he must sit upon a central throne and hold every atom of the world in his hand and cause all things to work together. The very idea of God, the barest theistic faith, carries with it this grand result, as the seed carries the flower in its bosom. When we believe in God we know that all things cohere in the unity and order of one system.

The second word is Christ. Christ is God come down so that we can see him. Christ shows us what God is in his inmost nature and heart. What Christ did God did and is still doing. The whole life of Jesus is compressed into one marvelous shining line, "who went about doing good." The supreme truth that breaks in splendor out of the cross of Christ is that God is love and in him is no darkness at all. We therefore know through God in Christ that all things are working together for good. Love beats at the heart of the universe.

And the third word is experience. Paul said, "We know." How did he know? Not by reasoning, not from Moses or Isaiah, but directly by his own experience. The primal truths of life are not the products of our reasoning, but the practical needs of our experience. The heart is a shorter path to ethical and spiritual truth than the brain.

Often the heart is sure where the mind but dimly sees or doubts or even denies. God hath set eternity in the human heart, and out of this great deep well up the primary spiritual instincts and intuitions by which we live. Paul was a prophet, and he knew, and we may know in the same way. If we trust our fundamental needs and impulses we shall believe in God and also in Christ, and then we will not let our heart be troubled.

But is it not surprising if not incredible that Paul should know this truth by experience? Was he not a persecuted man, an outcast from his people, hunted like a wild beast over the earth and at last run down under a Roman executioner's sword? Could Paul know out of such an experience that all things were working together for his good? Why, yes, that is just the kind of people that do know this truth best; not those that are out in the sunshine of prosperity so well as those that are in the shadow of adversity and sorrow. The author once had a remarkable confirmation of this in his pastoral experience. There was in the town a family consisting of an esteemed physician, the mother and three daughters, cultured young women who were the admiration of the place. The three daughters rapidly vanished one after another into the un-

seen. Then one morning word flew around that the husband, a man of apparently ruddy health, had suddenly expired in the night. When I went to that home that morning I felt afraid to enter. I was ushered into the presence of the widow sitting alone, with the body of her husband beautiful in death visible through an open door. She was slightly pale but calm and seemed to be enveloped in a mystic halo that awed me into silence. I did not tell her that all things were working together for her good, because I did not have faith enough to tell her that: but she told me; it was the first thing she said. Yes, she knew better than anybody else in all that sorrowing town that morning that all things were working together for her good. Her heart told her so, by experience she knew. "The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

So by these various paths we reach the summit of our assurance that God reigns and that though "clouds and darkness are round about him," yet "righteousness and justice are the habitation of his throne." So are we sure that the world is good at its core and that it is growing better on the surface.

And what a grand uplifting, inspiring assurance

it is. It places us at the center of creation and starts streams of blessing flowing in upon us from every direction. It plants our feet on the eternal Rock of Ages, marshals around us the angels of God, throws over us the shadow of the Almighty, and encircles us in the Everlasting Arm. It is a shield for every temptation and a balm for every sorrow. It solves our problems and enables us to roll the universe out of our hands upon the shoulder of God. It sounds a trumpet note of courage and triumph. It gives us a vision that turns life into victory. It persuades us that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The ills we see,
The mysteries of sorrow, deep and long,
The dark enigmas of permitted wrong,
Have all one key:
This strange, sad world is but our Father's school;
All chance and change his love will grandly overrule.

XVI

PRACTICAL OPTIMISM

In discussing so great a question as whether the world is growing better, which involves so big and boundless a thing as the constitution of the universe, we must at times feel that it is overwhelmingly too much for us and that "much study is a weariness of the flesh." Is there not some surer cure for pessimism and a shorter path to optimism? It is no disparagement of the reasons that have been adduced in favor of an optimistic view of the world to say that there is.

The practical cure of pessimism is the personal practice of optimism. A subjective life ever tends to slip into the stagnation and swamp of pessimism, and objective life flows out into the world and grows green with optimism. Self-consciousness breeds morbidness and misery. It is a disease of the mind that engenders all other diseases, including those of the body. Imagination has strange power to create out of consciousness an inner world of its own and then people it with all manner of

demons that plague the soul, or to fill it with clouds that cast their shadows upon the outer world. A sure way to make ourselves miserable is to coddle ourselves in comfort. We are certain to miss pleasure when we seek it, and are likely to get it when we forget it. The cure for this inner diseased life is a healthy objective life. All the senses look outward and normally flow forth as streams from a fountain; when they are turned inward they stagnate and grow foul. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God": he said it "in his heart" before he found it in the world, and out of the heart ever come the deepest issue of life.

The way to believe in a better world is to set about making it better. We soon believe in what we do. The things we make, make us; the mind like the hand becomes imbued with the dye it works in. There is always inspiration in improvement, and any little betterment we make in the world encourages us to believe that the whole round frame of things is growing better. The burdens of the world may press ever so heavily upon us, but the moment we begin to relieve their pressure on others they begin to ease up on us. Our own load grows lighter as we put our shoulder under another's load; our own sorrows are soothed as we help to com-

fort others. This is the psychology of human trouble, a secret known to all the saints, and most surely of all by Jesus. In losing our life we save it.

One does not need to go far or wait long to begin this practical optimism. Let each one begin right now and right where he is. Within the range of his eye or the reach of his hand there is some good deed waiting to be done, some kind word to speak, some helpful act to do, some gracious ministry to perform. Such service calls for no special gifts or means, no culture or gold, no conspicuous station and splendid opportunity, but only for the generous heart and willing hand. Never mind the cobwebs of pessimistic doubt that diseased thoughts and moods like black spiders have spun in the chambers of the brain: set the red blood of healthy activity coursing through the arteries and it will quickly sweep these away. Instead of casting the shadows of our own clouded mind on the world and thereby darkening its gloom and also deepening our own pessimism, let us radiate upon the world the light of our own benevolence and cheer and thereby brighten it up and also hearten our own optimism. Instead of being sponges sucking everything up and creating a bitter desert around us, let us be fountains flinging forth irrigating streams.

If we plant flowers around us our world will become a garden whose fragrance will refresh us.

It is as useless as it is easy to criticize the universe, and the universe will go on its way and not mind us: let us turn our hand to mending it, and this will answer or at least quiet our criticism. It is always easier to be critical than correct; and it is never a sign of genius simply to find fault. Real genius not only sees, but it also acts; it uses criticism only as a means of improvement. The world has critics enough and has had them from time immemorial; its great need and urgent call is for soldiers and builders to put down its enemies and rebuild it and for saviors who will lay down their lives for it.

The busiest people are usually the happiest. Work drives out and kills off worry. Idleness is emptiness that is full of the devil. The real cure for disease is health, and health is activity.

Sympathy with others is a salve to our own sorrows. Service and sacrifice save us from ourselves and heal our own hurts. Anything that carries us out of ourselves, such as a great disaster or some public excitement, instantly causes us to forget our own troubles. People in the war zone of France were scarcely conscious of ordinary hard-

ships in the midst of the extraordinary horrors raging around them. Soldiers fought on, unconscious of their wounds. It is harder to bear the petty personal annoyances of everyday life than great social sorrows that drown out our self-consciousness. We need the expulsive power of a great interest to give inspiration and courage to life. The vision of a better world is such an incentive and bugle call to duty.

Let us arouse our objective interests and throw ourselves into the work of the world. Clear up a little space in the cluttered, burdened, sorrowing world around you and brighten it with your personal presence and cheer. Visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Lend a helping hand. Be sympathetic and kindly. Smile, and the world will smile with you. These are common duties and little things, but little things make perfection and will even make a better world.

It is a beneficent law of our life that as we divide and share our mental and spiritual treasures with others they multiply in our own hands, as did the loaves in the hands of the disciples. If one discovers a truth and then imparts it to others, he does not have less truth in his own mind, but more. The very act of telling it clears it up and deepens

it in his mind. For this reason the teacher is learning more than any one else and is the best scholar in his own class. We do not know anything well until we tell it to some one else. So is it with all spiritual goods. We become patient only as we practice patience, and we grow more loving and lovely only as we love others. In spiritual arithmetic, subtraction is addition, and dividing multiplies. The largest and wealthiest souls are those that are most lavish in bestowing their gifts and goods on others. The happiest are those that make others happy. Jesus gave his life for the life of the world, and his cross is his supreme crown of joy.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." This is the secret of an optimistic life. As we radiate sunshine upon others it is reflected back into our own souls. The streams we pour out upon others come back as rain and dew in our own hearts and keep them fresh and full and brimming over.

Do with your might what your hand finds to do in making the world better and it will be a better world for you. Pessimistic doubts will then dissolve in optimistic faith.

For the heart grows rich in giving:
All its wealth is living grain.
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.

May every soul that touches mine,
Be it the slightest contact, get therefrom some good,
Some little grace, one kindly thought,
One aspiration yet unfelt, one bit of courage
For the darkening sky, one gleam of faith
To brave the thickening ills of life,
One glimpse of brighter sky beyond the gathering mist,
To make this world worth while,
And Heaven a surer heritage.

XVII

THE BLESSED HOPE

"THEN cometh the end." This world is not a finality. Transitoriness is stamped on all things human and earthly.

The earth itself will end. It is not a stable planet, much less an eternal world. It certainly had a beginning in time and will as certainly have an end. The seeds of decay and dissolution are planted in its very constitution; its doom was on it from the beginning. How it will end science is not sure, as it is not sure how it began. It may slowly freeze to death as it cools down and floats round the dying sun as a planetary corpse, like the moon, coffined, it may be, in ice and wrapped in a shroud of snow. It may be drawn in a slowly winding spiral towards the sun, as Sir George Darwin calculated and predicted, and finally plunge into its fiery depths, the mother sun devouring her earth child. Or it may be blotted out suddenly by some colossal cosmic collision. God is constantly creating and

extinguishing worlds, as snowflakes are ceaselessly forming and melting in the air.

Humanity will end. Just how humanity will end we do not know, but the cooling earth itself will render human life impossible millions of years before it meets its own doom. And we may be thankful that humanity will end. For it will never be perfected on this earth. Evil will cling to it to the last. The tares are too closely intertwined with the wheat ever to be wholly rooted up. Human nature has been too deeply stained with sin ever to have all the discoloration and poison washed out of it by the penitential tears of earth. This world, however it may attain to the visions and dreams of prophets and poets, will always have some evil mixed with its good. It will be a not wholly extinct volcano, however its slopes and summit may be sunny and green and fruitful. It may slumber long ages, and then blow up in a cataclysmic explosion. The devil is to be loosed "for a little time" at the end of his imprisonment (Rev. 20: 1–3).

And at its best this world is not our final home. It bears every mark of being a preparatory world; a field in which seeds are planted that sprout but do not blossom and bear fruit; a workshop in which

products are roughly shaped out but not finished; a school in which primary courses of study are pursued but which is not crowned with graduation day. This life without more life is a poor and pitiful and meaningless fragment. This world is only a little island ensphered in an infinitely larger world. Take the other world away and this world shrinks into small size and insignificant value. Everything goes down in the market; not an acre of ground or a steel beam is worth as much, and especially does human life become cheap. Give us the other world, enswathe this world in the blue of eternity and disclose the celestial walls of heaven, and everything comes up in the market, and human life is touched with divine issues and rises to infinite worth. The human soul has an intense passion for life and refuses to part with it at the edge of the grave and eagerly peers out over the ocean of death that it may discern the green mountain top of a far new world.

This world plainly points to another world in which the soul is developed into mature growth and ripe fruitage, in which as a rough precious stone it is shaped and polished into a perfect jewel, and in which its education is being rounded out to completion. All the disappointments and tears and in-

justices of earth are passionate appeals and prophecies that lay hold on the unseen and eternal for their consummation, and all the unfulfilled quests of the human mind for truth and yearnings of the human heart for love are quenchless passions that dream of eternal satisfaction. The bird migrating southward finds a sunnier clime and the bee finds its flower. Shall the instinct of the bird and bee and beast be true and find its appropriate felicity, and that of man be false and doomed to cruel disappointment? The soul has instincts for another world that fly on unwearied wings and build their nests in the eaves of eternity. We are children far up an inland river, but we know it runs out into the sea and can hear the waves upon the shore.

> My own dim life should teach me this,
> That life shall live forevermore,
> Else earth is darkness at the core,
> And dust and ashes all that is.

The hope of immortality is found everywhere in the world, growing, not like some rare flower that is found only on some lonely mountain top, but like grass that grows all over the earth, yet it receives its clearest confirmation in Christian fact and faith. It is a fundamental truth of Scripture

and it was brought out of the twilight of hope and speculation into the light of day in the resurrection of our Lord. He was a traveler returned from the other world, and he left us the immortal music of his assurance: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." With this promise shining as a star in our sky, we bear our burdens and fight our battles and fear not death, for it is simply going home.

When the end of the world will come, how it will come, we do not know. Scripture paints apocalyptic pictures of the end, but these visions are symbolical and poetic, giving us a sense of the majesty and mystery of the end, but are not to be taken literally, which would make them grotesque and impossible. We have faith that the end will come at the right time when this world has run its course. And we have faith that it will come in the right way so as to end this world with a worthy climax. The world demands judgment, and it will have its final assize. The saints of God are to receive rewards, and they will get them. The

glory of Christ is to be manifested, and he will not fail of his crown. Heaven is to be ushered in as the eternal state, and God is to be all in all.

All this calls for appropriate manifestation. God's ways with men are to receive public and final vindication. The last act in the mighty drama of this world, we would fain believe, will be staged and its curtain rung down in a grand amphitheater with fitting scenic symbols and splendors. But "flesh and blood" will not appear on that stage. It will move in another realm. The figurative language of Scripture as to the final coming of the Lord, the resurrection and the judgment is a symbolic suggestion to our imagination of the end. The reality will far surpass our poor power to conceive it, and material images, when taken literally, only degrade it. Then all the visions and dreams of the prophets shall receive their highest and final fulfillment. Then the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Then shall we be like them that dream, and our mouth shall be filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.

This is the blessed hope. It completes and

crowns this earthly life. This world, that has been one age-long battle and has been burdened with sorrows and drenched with tears, "crowned with attributes of woe like glories," is worth while in view of this grand consummation. Crowned with this hope, it "means intensely, and means good." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This is our final faith in God:

> That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves.

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